Rep. Voorhis: Dies' Man Friday *by Adam Lapin*

# NEW MASSES

*FIFTEEN CENTS*

*April 30, 1940*

## Balkan Zero Hour

*by Alter Brody*

## Look West, Voter, Look West

*by Al Richmond*

## I Attended the French Trials

*by Philippe Deval*

## The Lowdown on Nylon

*by Stefan Rader*

## The Making of "Native Son"

*by Samuel Sillen*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Between Ourselves

OUR holiday, May Day, is coming round again. If you have your NM copies handy, turn to the issue this time last year. (Chamberlain was then still fumbling the ball along the Munich gridiron.) You'll get a fair idea how far the world has moved. You will see why May Day this year of necessity becomes Peace Day. Millions will pour into streets and meeting halls to protest Roosevelt's drift toward war. In this year's New York parade the United May Day Committee tells us that there will be an enormous trade union Gulliver breaking through Thurman Arnold's indictments. There will be balloons, floats, pushcarts, baby carriages, taxicabs, dramatizations of best selling books—the people's own way of telling the engineers of war that they had better not count on them.

NM contributors are part of the long list of noted writers who have endorsed the May Day Committee's Call. Wrote George Seldes: "The American people are determined to preserve peace for themselves, but powerful forces including the administration and a large part of the press are inevitably leading us into the European war. The sale of munitions, airplanes, and other materials lead to war. Unneutral statements of the press lead to war. The Wilson tragedy is being repeated. . . . " And Ben Appel, the novelist, said: "May Day, 1940, is a momentous day in a momentous year. History is on the march. Death and wars are on the march. But beyond the disasters in Europe, the future, the decent future, seems nearer than in many years. The future seems nearer because history is marching toward it. As a writer I have this hope in common with the worker. A future without war, a future without racial hatreds, without the oppression of the many by the few. Reaction against the worker is reaction against the honest writer. The right to organize and the right to write honestly are interlocked. An attack against unionism is an attack against all liberty, including the freedom to write the truth. We must triumph together or be destroyed together. We will win the fight for progress and liberty because the future belongs to the people."

In celebration of the holiday, NM will appear—finances permitting—a day earlier (Wednesday). The issue will include topnotch features led by Corliss Lamont's provocative piece entitled "Reasons for Optimism." Glance at the back cover for fuller details.

Judging from the letters that have come in, last week's cartoonless issue came as a shock to many people. The response to save the magazine from its creditors has been, to say the least, heartwarming. Anna Rochester, the economist and author of *Rulers of America* and of the forthcoming book, *Why Farmers Are Poor,* joined the chorus. She sent $10 along with this sentence: "Sorry I can't do more—this number (NM April 23) should touch the hearts and purses that have not yet responded." To date NM has received $11,791.21 of the $25,000 it needs—urgently. The letter from a committee of writers on the next page will tell you the story.

We count heavily on NM's Readers League to spread the magazine throughout the country and to help us in raising the funds without which we cannot continue publication. The League was the moving spirit behind our successful art auction three weeks ago. At its last meeting it selected a committee to enlarge the League in cities outside of New York. Key people in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans, St. Louis have already responded by starting small groups. They ask that readers interested in joining the League communicate with Eva May Wright or Sara Dona at NM's office. Elliot Paul is the organization's national chairman.

John L. Lewis' speech at Monongah, W. Va., printed in NM (April 16), roused many readers to write us. The letters were all favorable. Typical was Eva Robin's: "I could hardly have resisted sending in a letter, so deeply was I moved by Lewis' simplicity, directness, and honesty. The average person these days is so bewildered and overwhelmed by the horrors of recent events, national and international, that he is apt to lose all sense of values in so far as morals and decency are concerned. And our great statesmen and leaders are so preoccupied with problems far removed from the daily needs of the people, that a non-political person perforce begins to think, since everything is beyond his comprehension anyhow, he might as well withdraw into himself and go about his own business.

"Lewis' speech gave me a sense of potency. If it is actually in the power of decent people to get what in their hearts they most desire by placing their confidence in honest leaders, then I can do something about rectifying the many ills from which the major part of our population suffers. I want, almost as much as life itself, to do away with the tragedies resulting from unemployment, from the insecurities which harass so many in illness and when old age comes, and of the dread of the loss of near and dear ones through entanglements in war. And now with the possibility of a third party coming into the political field which promises to hang out signposts leading to a new life for the American people, I pledge it my sincere and active support."

## *Who's Who*

ALTER BRODY, the author of several books, has written frequently for NM on European affairs. . . . Al Richmond is managing editor of the *People's World* published in San Francisco. . . . Philippe Deval is a French journalist who has contributed to NM before. . . . Stefan Rader is an industrial chemist. . . . Frank Goelet is the pen name of a newspaperman who has covered New York politics for many years. . . . John Malcolm Brinnin's poetry has been published frequently in NM. . . . Adam Lapin is NM and *Daily Worker* correspondent in Washington. . . . James Morison is a free lance labor journalist who is a frequent contributor to NM. . . . Anna Rochester is a noted American economist, author of *Rulers of America* and the forthcoming book, *Why Farmers Are Poor.* . . . Cora MacAlbert has contributed to NM before, as well as to the *New Yorker,* the *New Republic, Coronet,* and other publications.

## *Flashbacks*

FROM a "Flashbacks" fan comes this note on the militant working class on May Day nearly four centuries ago: "Journeymen printers in Lyons, France, after a year of loose dispute, struck, in April 1539, as neatly as one could ask for today, demanding decent hours, decent pay, and better living conditions. Picketing was done in a stern, disciplined way, forcing all arrests to be mass arrests and therefore ineffective because the prisons could not hold all the strikers and sympathizers. All striking workmen were pledged not to return to work except in a body and to reject all compromises. The new printing industry was completely tied up and the struggle continued until May 1, 1543, when it ended in victory for the workers. On that day the royal government granted to the striking journeymen printers of Lyons concessions which in principle had to be extended subsequently to other trades in France. Three months later (Aug. 3, 1543) strike leader Stephen Dolet was hanged on charges of 'heresy.'"

# This Week

NEW MASSES, VOL. XXXV, NO. 6

*April 30, 1940*

Zero Hour in the Balkans *by Alter Brody* . . . . . 4
Look West, Voter, Look West *by Al Richmond* . . . 8
I Attended the French Trials *by Philippe Deval* . . . 10
Nylon: Mr. du Pont Turns Silkworm *by Stefan Rader* . 13
Gropper's Cartoon . . . . . 14
How to Steal An Election *by Frank Goelet* . . . . . 15
Poem for the Birth of X *A Poem by John Malcolm Brinnin* 16
Rep. Voorhis: Dies' Man Friday *by Adam Lapin* . . . 17
The 30 Cent Debate *by James Morison* . . . . . 19
The State of the Nation . . . . . 21
Editorial Comment . . . . . 22
Reader's Forum . . . . . 25

REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Meaning of Bigger Thomas *by Samuel Sillen* . . . 26
The Aviation Business *by Anna Rochester* . . . . . 28
Alice in Naziland *by Cora MacAlbert* . . . . . 29

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Take the "Heavenly Express" *by Alvah Bessie* . . . . 30
Exhibition *by James Dugan* . . . . . 30
Art work by Mischa Richter, Aime, A. Ajay, McGill

**Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.**

Published weekly by WEEKLY MASSES CO., INC., at 461 Fourth Ave., New York City. (West Coast Bureau, 6715 Hollywood Boulevard, Room 203, Hollywood, Calif.)
Copyright, 1940, WEEKLY MASSES CO., INC., Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission.
Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies 15 cents. Subscriptions $4.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months $2.50; three months $1.25; Foreign $5.50 a year; six months $3; three months $1.50. In Canada, $5 a year, $2.75 for six months. Subscribers are notified that no change in address can be effected in less than two weeks. NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by stamped, addressed envelopes. NEW MASSES does not pay for contributions.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WRITERS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE TO SAVE NEW MASSES

*Theodore Dreiser, Richard Wright, George Seldes, Ruth McKenney, William Blake*

**ROOM 1204, 461 FOURTH AVE., NEW YORK CITY**

April 25, 1940

Dear Friend:

Last week we wrote to all New Masses subscribers and told them the truth about your magazine—our magazine. What we wrote a week ago remains true today: New Masses is at the point of death.

Last week the magazine went to press without cartoons and photographs. There was no money to pay the engraver. This week, the editors inform us, there would again have been no cartoons and photographs had it not been for the intervention of a friend who is paying the engraving bill.

New Masses needs hundreds—thousands of such friends.

The danger still remains that the next issue, scheduled to appear May Day, may not go to press at all. Think what that would mean!

We repeat what we wrote to subscribers:

You know what New Masses stands for. You cherish it as we do. War spreads in Europe, new millions are engulfed, human liberty is extinguished.

That must not happen here.

That is why America cannot afford to let New Masses die.

Today there is still time for all of us—together—to save it. In a few days it may be too late.

Would you give your blood for a transfusion to save the life of a dear friend?

Wire or airmail whatever you can—$100, $50, $10, $1—the largest amount you can, to keep the warmakers from saying:

"New Masses is off the newsstands of the nation. Full speed ahead for war."

Theodore Dreiser
Richard Wright
George Seldes
Ruth McKenney
William Blake

***EMERGENCY RETURN SLIP***

WRITERS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR NEW MASSES
461 Fourth Avenue
New York, New York

Gentlemen:

I enclose $..... as my donation to the Emergency Drive for New Masses.

My Name .....

Address .....

City & State .....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Zero Hour in the Balkans

## Alter Brody surveys the possible Balkan battle fronts. Which way will Turkey go? The Black Sea and the Dardanelles.

IT MUST be clear by now that Soviet diplomatic constancy does not consist in standing still but in keeping apace of events. In diplomacy, as in everything else in this relative universe, "it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place," to use that excellent paraphrase of relativity from *Alice in Wonderland*. In the last few months there has been a considerable shift of position in the Balkans and the Near East and, accordingly, we can expect Soviet diplomacy to do a lot of running in order "to keep in the same place."

Before the signing of the Anglo-French-Turkish pact the one frontier where the Soviet Union felt secure was her Caucasian border, where her main oil district is situated. Turkey, who owes the fact that she is not now a couple of Anglo-French "mandates" largely to Soviet aid in 1921, was her closest and oldest diplomatic friend. At the very time when Britain, France, Italy, and Greece were plotting the partition of what was left of the Turkish empire, the Soviet Union voluntarily ceded to the struggling new Turkey the Armenian provinces of Kars and Ardahan, which czarist Russia had annexed in 1877. This entailed a considerable sacrifice on the part of the Soviet Armenian republic, which had little reason for loving the Turks.

In 1925, when the Anglo-Turkish dispute over the Mosul district threatened to break into war, the Soviet Union backed Turkey loyally. In the post-Versailles years, British imperialism dreamed of linking its Mesopotamian oil fields with the Soviet Caucasian oil district over the corpse of Turkey, a compelling reason for Soviet-Turkish cooperation. The trend of post-war Turkish history indicated that Turkey's territorial ambitions would be in the direction of regaining her pre-war position on the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf via Iraq, Syria, and Palestine, areas in which she could hardly conflict with Soviet interests.

### KEMAL'S DEATH

There was only one disturbing element in this picture—the death of Kemal, founder of the New Turkey, in 1938 and the accession of Inonu as president of Turkey. Kemal's bitter experience had given him as good reasons for suspecting the Allies as he had for trusting the Soviet Union, but Inonu, one-time premier under Kemal, had strong pro-Allied leanings. The year before he died Kemal broke with Inonu over the latter's pro-Allied policies and his sabotage of Soviet-Turkish friendship and forced Inonu out of the premiership. Nevertheless, when Inonu succeeded Kemal as president, it was expected that Turkish self-interest would lead him to continue the now traditional Kemalist policy of Soviet-Turkish cooperation.

It was at the opposite, Balkan end of the Black Sea that the Soviet Union had reason for concern. All through the period of Soviet-Turkish cooperation, which lasted from 1921 to 1939, the security of both the USSR and Turkey was based on the policy of preventing any third power from penetrating the Black Sea. Though the Turks were forbidden to fortify the Dardanelles by the Lausanne Treaty, Turkey, with the backing of the Soviet Union, was prepared to defend this policy. When, with Soviet diplomatic aid, Turkey secured the right to fortify the Dardanelles at the Montreux Convention, this principle was written into the terms of the convention, subscribed to by both Britain and France.

### THE DANUBE

But the Dardanelles were not the only entrance to the Black Sea. The German-controlled Danube, which flows through the cardboard kingdom of Rumania, is almost as important. The Nazi pressure on Rumania and the equally dangerous Allied "guarantee" of Rumania were threats to the Soviet-Turkish principle of not permitting any third power to establish itself on the Black Sea littoral. It was therefore expected that once the Soviet Union secured herself in the Baltic, she would turn her attention to the problem which Rumania, the sick man of the Balkans, presented to both the USSR and Turkey in the Black Sea. The increasing friendliness between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria provided a possible solution. The province of Dobruja, which Rumania wrested from Bulgaria in 1913, lies on the southern side of the Danube mouth. The province of Bessarabia, which Rumania seized from the USSR in 1919, lies on the northern shore. If Rumania threatened to collapse, like Poland, before a German or Allied thrust, the Soviet Union and Bulgaria would be compelled to act in mutual defense by closing the mouth of the Danube against all aggressors.

The Anglo-French-Turkish pact of last October completely altered this diplomatic picture. It is true that the tripartite pact expressly exempted Turkey from any obligatory action against the Soviet Union. But when Turkey refused to conclude a complementary treaty with the USSR, the Soviet Union realized that the tripartite pact was aimed against her quite as much as against Germany, and therefore Soviet concern suddenly shifted from the Balkan to the Turkish end of the Black Sea.

Allied designs on the Soviet Union via their Turkish pact have been so freely advertised by themselves that they need little restatement. Immediately after the Anglo-French-Turkish treaty was signed, the authoritative French commentator Pertinax declared gleefully (New York *Times*, Oct. 19, 1939) "The decisive factor . . . is that Anglo-French maritime power will be able to assert itself in the Black Sea where Russia is vulnerable." Apparently Pertinax did not take very seriously the clause in the pact exempting Turkey from obligatory action against the Soviet Union.

At first there was an attempt to screen the concentration of a vast Allied army in the Near East under General Weygand, by inspired press reports of Soviet concentrations in the Caucasus and points east. This mirror-writing technique, which has become a favorite of the British Foreign Office, needed only to be read backward to be decoded into an Allied concentration which, by February 18 (New York *Times*), totaled more than half a million men. As the New York *Times* ingenuously put it:

> Britain has heard of the concentration of Russian troops along the borders of Iran and Afghanistan. While Russia as part of its still secret agreement with Germany *might* be planning to move against Britain in that region, there was a likelihood that the Allies themselves would make that move, especially if Turkey, once a close friend of the Soviet Union . . . might cooperate.

This plan, however, was only one wing of a larger Allied plan to strike at the Soviet Union: in the North, in the name of defending "Little Finland"; in the South, in the name of cutting Germany's oil supplies—at the same time preserving their tacit armistice with their official enemy, Germany, in the hope of persuading her to join them if their attack on the Soviet Union showed any signs of success. At the height of Soviet-Finnish hostilities Allied spokesmen bayed out their anti-Soviet designs like a pack of overexcited hunting dogs. On January 5 the military expert of the Paris *Temps* declared:

> It would be all advantage and no risk to blockade Murmansk in the Soviet North and by naval action in the Black Sea to divest Russia of her oil wells. . . . All these actions, of course, would be tantamount to war with Russia, but now is the time to examine in a purely objective manner the consequence of such steps by the two Western powers in the near future.

Doubtless the Soviet Union too has been "examining the consequence of such steps in a purely objective manner" and that is why she is clearing her diplomatic decks. Possibly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when Turkey finds that she is facing the undivided attention of the Red Army, she may repent of having forsworn the foreign policy of her founder and great leader, Kemal Pasha.

SOVIET DIPLOMACY

The first Soviet diplomatic step toward isolating the Turkish front has been the Soviet-Finnish peace treaty. Whether it was one of its original objectives or not, there is no doubt that as a result of that treaty the Allied attempt to create a Scandinavian front against the Soviet Union was frustrated, and the overadvertised Allied pincer lost its northern jaw. (The Scandinavian front that the Allies finally precipitated is at present an anti-British rather than an anti-Soviet front.) But there still remains the possibility that the Allies might try to reconstruct their pincer on the western and eastern shores of the Black Sea, using Rumania and Turkey to strike at the Ukraine and the Caucasus respectively.

The Soviet Union cannot afford to take the Turkish betrayal lightly. It was not merely that Turkey switched from being the watchman to being the burglar's accomplice in the Black Sea. It was that Turkey's allies were grooming her for an entirely new and sinister role in western Asia. Obviously, only the most tempting considerations could have influenced Turkey to make such a break with her diplomatic past. And only equally weighty reasons could have influenced Britain to woo Turkey as an ally, even at the risk of alienating Italy on the one side and her own restive Arab mandates on the other. The history of British imperialism in eastern Asia furnishes a clue. There is a strong possibility that Turkey is being cast in the role of imperialism's gendarme in western Asia, just as in the nineteenth century Japan was fostered into power by British imperialism as its gendarme in eastern Asia. Such a policy might ultimately build up a Turkey that would be as much of an imperialist rival as Japan is now. But imperialism cannot afford to look too far into the future.

ANOTHER DANGER

This, in itself, would make Turkey a threatening neighbor for the USSR; but there is another, concomitant danger. That is that Inonu's imperialist conversion would lead him to revive the pan-Turanianism of "Young Turk" days with its fantastic racial claims to the Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Azerbaijanians, and other Turkish-related nationalities of the Soviet Union. When Turkey and the Soviet Union reaffirmed their friendship on the occasion of the Anglo-Turkish crisis over the Mosul district, Kemal formally renounced any pan-Turanian ambitions. But after his break with the Soviet Union it was not unlikely that Inonu would try to overcome the deep-rooted trust of the Turkish masses in their old ally by inflaming them against the USSR with a brew of pan-Turanian imperialism.

Fortunately the Soviet position in the Balkans and the Near East has been strengthened by the trend of international events. First, increasingly open American support of the Allies has made Germany a diplomatic prisoner of the Soviet Union by accentuating her dependence on Soviet neutrality. This ensures that regardless of what steps Germany may take in the Balkans, she will not trespass on Soviet interests. Second, as a result of Allied commitments to Turkey, Italy, whose imperialist interests are irreconcilable with Turkey's, has been definitely forced into an anti-Allied, anti-Turkish position, despite Mussolini's attempt merely to play off one side against the other. This does not mean that Italy has become a friend of the Soviet Union. But it does mean that the vulnerable communications of the vast Allied-Turkish army in the Near East, with its supply bases in Britain and France, are at the mercy of a hostile Italy pursuing her own aims in the Balkans and the Black Sea.

Germany's success in Scandinavia may inspire Italy to emulate her in the Balkans. But there is a likelihood that the same champions of neutral rights who precipitated Scandinavia into war by violating Norwegian neutrality may duplicate their feat in the Balkans. The prospect of peace in the Balkans has been worrying the Allies who "guaranteed" it only last spring. Apropos of the hurried recall of British Balkan envoys to London for an emergency conference, a London dispatch to the New York *Times,* March 29, has the following explanation:

> Germany for the last two weeks has been trying to induce Italy and Russia to join in guaranteeing the status quo in the Balkans. If they could through such a guarantee remove Balkan fears of a German-Russian attack, it would be impossible for the Allies to obtain the cooperation of any of these states in attacking Germany. . . . There is no attempt in London to conceal the fact that without the cooperation of Turkey *and at least one of the Balkan states,* it would be extremely difficult for them to wage war on Germany. [Italics mine.—A. B.]

Since it has become a standard technique for the Allies to organize their plots against the Soviet Union in the name of "attacking Germany," one need only substitute "Russia" for "Germany" in this London dispatch to get its significance, so far as the USSR is

Mischa Richter

*The Middle Way*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

concerned. The recent "reassuring" statement of Chamberlain that this emergency conference of British Balkan envoys (including the ambassadors to Italy and the USSR) was merely to "develop . . . commercial relations" indicates that Britain's hand has been stayed by the outbreak in Norway.

### TRIAL BALLOON

The Allies have been casting about for some other pretext for provoking a war in the Black Sea in case Rumania does not need to be "defended." On March 29 the New York *Times* carried a dispatch from Bucharest, "from a source close to the French Embassy," stating that "Turkey had agreed to permit the passage of British and French warships through the Dardanelles to choke off Germany's supply line from Russia in the Black Sea." This would, of course, be a violation of the Montreux Convention, signed by Britain and France, as well as by Turkey and the Soviet Union. The Bucharest dispatch was promptly denied in London, but it looked suspiciously like a trial balloon to test international reaction. If the Allies can find no other way of disturbing the peace of the Balkans, it is not unlikely that they will take this one. Such an act by Turkey would amount to a declaration of war on the USSR.

The Soviet Union would be in a very favorable military position if she should be compelled to defend herself against Turkey and her Anglo-French masters in a war in western Asia. It is not at all certain that the Allies would be able to use their naval superiority to blockade the Soviet Union's Black Sea ports and cut the shipment of oil from the Batum end of the Baku-Batum pipe line. The repeated lesson of the vulnerability of the British Fleet at Scapa Flow to hostile bombers and submarines will probably discourage the Allies from sending any valuable capital ships to the Black Sea, where the air and submarine arms of the Red Navy are dominant. As for the Turkish control of the Dardanelles, there is the possibility that the Soviet Union might be compelled to seek friends with whom she could operate to outflank the Dardanelles and bottle up the Allied fleet in the Black Sea. In the 1912 Balkan war a Bulgarian army reached the outskirts of Constantinople.

The Soviet Union would enjoy an enormous industrial advantage in such a war. Turkey is still a backward, agricultural country, with no heavy industry capable of supporting a large army. She produces comparatively little steel and has to import a large part of her coal. Most of the supplies for both the Turkish and Allied armies would have to be transported thousands of miles through the Atlantic and Mediterranean from England and France, a long and hazardous supply line at the mercy of an Italy whom the Allies are willing but unable to appease. On the other hand, the Soviet Union's largest steel district, the Donbas, is conveniently situated in southern Russia in the event that a campaign becomes necessary either southwest in the Balkans or southeast in the Caucasus. And the Soviet Union's second great steel district, in the Urals, is conveniently situated for a campaign across the Caspian through Iran, which could outflank the Allied position in Mesopotamia. Nor is the Soviet oil supply so vulnerable to Allied attack as their propaganda claims. The Caucasian oil fields do not produce 95 percent of the Soviet oil as these dispatches state, but about 70 percent, and the proportion is steadily decreasing, with the opening of fresh wells in the Urals, the Ukraine, and Siberia. Second, the main Caucasian district, Baku, is on the Caspian, and not on the Black Sea; on the Iranian, and not on the Turkish border. Three hundred miles of a mountain range higher than the Alps separate Baku from the nearest Turkish air bases. And the closed Caspian Sea, on which only the Soviet Union and Iran border, is from a naval and military point of view a Soviet lake.

Partly because of the inaccessibility of the Soviet-Turkish frontier, partly because the limited Turkish communications in that region have been hopelessly disrupted by last winter's earthquake, there is a strong likelihood that Iran would become the battlefield of an Near Eastern war. If the Allies should force Iran into the war, control of the Caspian would enable the USSR to head off any thrust northward along Iran's recently completed Caspian–Persian Gulf railroad. It would be much easier for a Soviet army to reach the Anglo-Iranian Co. oil fields in southern Persia and Iraq than for an Allied army to reach the Soviet oil fields at Baku.

### IRAN'S POSITION

Iran, which has recently concluded a commercial treaty with the USSR, has good reason for favoring the Soviet side in such a war. The Soviet Union convincingly demonstrated that it has no imperialist designs on Iran by voluntarily relinquishing the Russian half of the two spheres of influence into which czarist Russia and Britain divided Persia (now Iran) in 1907. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. still holds on to Britain's half.

In 1937 Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan, with the diplomatic encouragement of the Soviet Union, signed the Saidabad nonaggression treaties creating a western Asiatic bloc, primarily aimed at resisting British imperialist expansion in that region. Now that Turkey has been appointed British imperialism's policeman in western Asia, Iran needs Soviet friendship more than ever. Nor can Iran remain oblivious to the threat of revived Turkish pan-Turanianism. In 1922 the Turkish adventurer Enver Pasha attempted to organize a counterrevolutionary uprising against the Soviet republics of Central Asia in the name of pan-Turanianism, only to be tracked down and shot as a bandit by the local soviets. Pan-Turanianism would be scorned by the Soviet republics of Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkomen, and Kirghiz which under socialism have already achieved a much higher industrial and cultural level than Turkey will ever achieve under her capitalist mentors. But it would inevitably antagonize Iran and Afghanistan, both of whom have many "Turanian" tribes in their mixed populations.

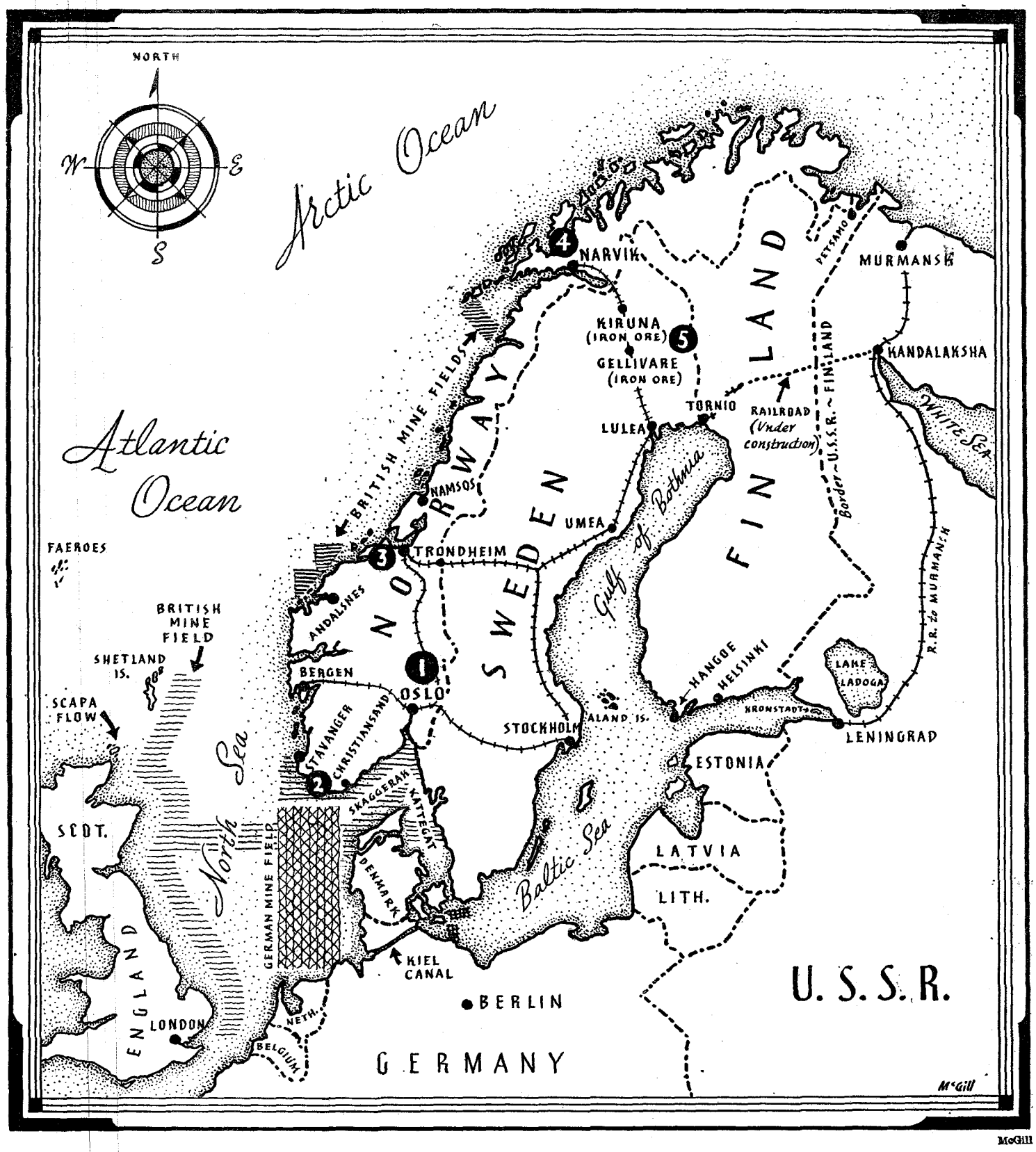
### THE ARAB PEOPLES

But Turkey's dedicated role as imperialist policeman in western Asia would clash even more sharply with the Arab peoples, some of them nominally free, some in British and French mandates, and others in outright colonies—all of whom nourish dreams of their own for a great pan-Arabic state. In the last war the Allies tricked the Arabs into fighting against the Turks by promising them independence. It is hardly likely that the Allies will succeed in getting the Arabs to fight *for the Turks,* whom they hate, by again promising them independence. But Allied commitments to the Turks preclude their even promising independence to the Arabs. Instead they are trying to win Arab support by betraying the Jews, though they are probably committed to betraying both the Jews and the Arabs to the Turks if they win the war. Soviet promissory notes enjoy a much higher rating in Asia than Britain's. A new "Revolt in the Desert" would more likely be against, instead of for, British imperialism.

There is an all-important difference between the Finnish and Turkish adventures so far as their Anglo-French plotters are concerned. Finland is not geographically strategic to either the British or French empires, though it presented a deadly threat to the Soviet Union. The success of their Finnish adventure would have been serious for the Soviet Union but the failure of their plot did not endanger their empires. A Turkish adventure might prove to be of an entirely different nature. Skillful Soviet diplomacy could confine the Turkish war front to Asia. But the consequences of a Turkish defeat could never be localized by the Allies. It would be a blow which the British empire and its French satellite could never survive. For the Near East is the neck of the British empire, connecting its London head and its African and Asiatic limbs. An Allied defeat in Turkey would simultaneously expose the Suez Canal and provoke a colonial revolt that would inevitably spread from Morocco to India, from Egypt to Senegal. The Moroccan, Algerian, Senegalese, Syrian, Egyptian, and Indian levies which the Allies have concentrated against the Soviet Union in the Near East in the hope that they would be better proof against Communist propaganda than London or Paris workers, may yet prove to be the undoing of the British and French empires. The French imperialists, having so much less to lose, are recklessly urging action. But the British imperialists with much more at stake are inclined to be cautious. They will consider carefully before gambling their empire and the future of world capitalism on the cast of their Turkish dice.

ALTER BRODY.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED




McGill

IN THE THIRD WEEK *of the Anglo-German struggle in Scandinavia the outlook is increasingly complicated for the Germans, especially if the Allies plan to force their hand with Sweden. The Skagerrak blockade has only partially interfered with German transports; airplane landings in Norway continue unimpeded; the Germans have increased their forces to at least three divisions, about 65,000 men, and are reported to be spreading their lines along the Swedish border beyond Oslo (1). On the other hand, the Allies seem to have landed forces outside Narvik (4) where they are reported challenging the German defenses; landings are reported at Namsos and Andalsnes, above and below Trondheim (3), where Allied troops claim to have joined Norwegian forces in preparation for a thrust against the railway east from Trondheim, which railway the Germans seized in last week's dash across the Norwegian waistline. British air forces also claim successive bombardments of the German-held towns of Stavanger and Christiansand (2). But it must be realized that the Allies are not at present concerned with southern Norway, whose reoccupation is almost excluded without very large forces. They seem more concerned with extending the theater of war to Sweden, where they would like to occupy the iron ore fields at Kiruna and Gellivare (5). Hence their assaults on Narvik and their pressure at Trondheim. The Germans are being forced to defend their hold on strategic ports, extend their lines from Oslo, and also dominate as many of the Swedish frontier points as possible. They may be compelled to send troops through southern Sweden and themselves dash for the iron ore fields. What Sweden does in the face of this double menace becomes most important. The extension of the war into Scandinavia, while an important strategic victory for the Germans, already confronts them with larger problems than they originally wanted to handle.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Look West, Voter, Look West

## California's "little Democratic" convention sets the pace. Focal point for a peace party. How Secretary Ickes' hotel room politics was stymied.

*San Francisco.*

THE cornerstone for a people's peace party in California has been laid. The popular democratic movement of this state has now gone beyond that of any other state in giving articulate and organized expression to the people's opposition to war and their mounting disquietude at the course of the Roosevelt administration. While the immediate factor for the crystallization of peace forces is the Democratic presidential primary contest on May 7, both in the conception of its leaders and the spirit of its followers the movement is more than a mere election coalition. It is a peace party in the making.

At the moment, the movement is centered around the Ellis E. Patterson slate in the primaries, nominally pledged to Lieutenant Governor Patterson as its presidential candidate. The pledge is a formality, necessitated by the election laws which require that each primary ticket name its presidential preference; in reality it is a delegation pledged to no candidate.

Its importance lies in the program it has espoused. That program contains a condemnation of the specific war features of the Roosevelt policy, and categorically declares: "We will oppose the nomination of Roosevelt or any other candidate dedicated to the war policies herein complained of." Thus, the issue of peace or war, expressed in concrete terms of opposition to the Roosevelt pro-war program, has been placed before the California electorate.

### THE FRESNO CONVENTION

The Fresno convention was the focal point of this developing peace party. It was a gathering of people who came to grips with serious problems and finally arrived at a clear statement of position, breaking with tradition and old political allegiances. It had all the suspense and conflict of a well constructed drama, with the compensation of a happy ending. It provided open play for diverse class forces with labor asserting its leadership.

Among the 312 delegates were old EPICs, veterans of the Upton Sinclair campaign of 1934; liberals associated with what was once the New Deal; state committee men and women of the Democratic Party, leaders of Democratic clubs and the Young Democratic movement; agricultural workers; veterans of the unemployed movement; Negro leaders; civic figures; money reformers and pension proponents; farmers; labor spokesmen.

There was no prior knowledge of the position of these diverse elements on the major issue, nor was their attitude toward the war policies of the Roosevelt administration known, particularly toward its chieftain, President Roosevelt himself. In fact, there were numerous indications that some might seek an anti-war plank diluted by failure to name and oppose the Roosevelt pro-war policies. To understand how the convention arrived at the advanced position it did, a bit of recent history is necessary.

Early in March Secretary of the Interior Ickes flew to San Francisco from Washington and rented a room in the swank Mark Hopkins Hotel atop Nob Hill. Having disposed of some minor matters, such as a dam and a reclamation project, the interior secretary devoted his talents to "harmony." A heterogeneous group of Democratic politicians trooped through the harmony mecca in Ickes' hotel room. When the trooping was over, a "harmony" slate had been born, pledged to FDR for a third term.

### THE HARMONY BOYS

It was a strange harmony quartet consisting of: (1) Mr. Ickes, spokesman for FDR and chief dispenser of federal patronage in the West; (2) William Gibbs McAdoo, Woodrow Wilson's secretary of the treasury, former US senator, present chairman of the board of the American President Lines, and partner of George Creel, World War I propagandist; (3) Governor Culbert L. Olson, whose opportunism has been matched only by his political ineptness; (4) Lieutenant Governor Patterson, Congressman Lee E. Geyer, and one or two others who represented the left in what was the New Deal coalition.

Patterson's entrance into this unprincipled hotel room combine pledged to Roosevelt, raised a storm among his supporters. Labor's Non-Partisan League sounded off with a sharp criticism of Patterson. He thereupon bolted the ticket. Later McAdoo also bolted in an effort to restore "harmony" by removing his own unpopular person from the scene. But it was too late. A new ticket was placed in the field, headed by Patterson and comprising those left forces which would not countenance a combination with McAdoo and Olson.

The new ticket floundered, grabbed at the catch phrase "principles, not personalities" as its reason for existence. Statements emanating from its headquarters assured the world that its preoccupation with "principles" excluded all consideration of personalities and hence the ticket was not anti-Roosevelt, anti-Garner, or anti-anybody. Seemingly, the idyllic state had been found in which principles were immaculately conceived, completely divorced from individuals and the political trends they represented. The Patterson campaigners confined themselves to several declarations for such laudable objectives as peace, pensions, social legislation, and jobs. They studiously avoided any statement on the ticket's relation to the Roosevelt administration and its war policies.

This trend reached its climax when Labor's Non-Partisan League, in endorsing the Patterson ticket, explained that "the executive board feels that the liberal Democratic slate is in no wise an anti-third term slate . . ." and urged "strengthening and extension of the New Deal." The *People's World,* San Francisco left wing daily, commented tartly:

> If the Patterson slate is not an anti-third term slate, anti-Roosevelt slate, then *what is it?* And *what* New Deal is to be strengthened and extended? Is it the former New Deal program abandoned by Roosevelt, or is it the empty shell which is still used to label the new reactionary war policies of the Roosevelt administration, which slashes relief while it spends billions for armaments?
>
> Puzzled observers might well ask, if the Patterson slate does not come out against Roosevelt's present policies, then why have a slate at all, why not go along with Olson's slate? If the progressives oppose the Roosevelt war policy, then how can they in the same breath imply support for Roosevelt who buried the program known as the New Deal?

These questions articulated tremendous mass feeling. The CIO councils in San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles—California's three largest cities—demanded a sharp statement against the Roosevelt pro-war drift. LNPL organizations in Alameda County, Contra Costa County, and other points echoed this sentiment. Remarked Estolv E. Ward, an executive vice president of the state LNPL organization, "There seems to be a rising tide of popular sentiment in California against a third term for Roosevelt."

### LABOR'S PROGRAM

On Saturday, April 13, prior to the opening of the "little democratic" convention at Fresno, LNPL's state board went into executive session, emerged with a detailed indictment of the Roosevelt administration in the foreign and domestic spheres, and declared against the candidacy of Roosevelt or any other nominee pledged to his policies. Labor, therefore, entered the convention with a clearly formulated program, based on an understanding of the political issues involved. The other elements at the convention lacked similar cohesion and clarity.

The issue of Roosevelt arose in relation to the question of peace. In the peace caucus, entrusted with drafting the plank on foreign policy, LNPL's resolution was adopted as the basis for the plank with but one dissenting vote. The resolution listed all the unneutral acts of the administration—repeal of the arms embargo, sales of planes to the Allies, activi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ties of its diplomats, statements of its spokesmen—and concluded with a declaration of opposition to "Roosevelt or any other candidate who encourages or condones such policies. . . ."

Despite this statement, the plank as drafted by a subcommittee for submission to the convention deleted the name of "Roosevelt" and mention of opposition to his candidacy. When the modified plank was read to the general session, a union delegate from Los Angeles arose and demanded: "Let's put Roosevelt's name in there. Let's call a spade a spade." The debate was on. It went on for two hours. Significantly, the lines were drawn as between the labor representatives, insisting on naming Roosevelt, and progressive politicians and liberals from Southern California who argued, on the ground of political expediency and vote-getting, against challenging the fetish of the Roosevelt name.

Big Bill Bailey of the Marine Firemen, Oilers, and Watertenders blasted away in waterfront vernacular:

> Are we going to fool the workers? Aint we gonna tell them who is leading them to war? . . . You talk about getting elected. What good is it sending one man to Congress when we don't educate the workers and there is sixty stew bums for every good man in Congress. . . .

Jack O'Donnell, a world war veteran and member of the Marine Cooks and Stewards, spoke:

> My union goes to sea. . . . The ships are being taken from under our men . . . Forty-five ships have been transferred from this coast with the sanction of President Roosevelt. . . . Our men are on the beach. What are you going to tell them? Are you going to tell them who is responsible? There is no use pussy-footing around here. It is a wrong approach. . . . It is not a straight approach.

These men were recognized as the voices of labor from down below. But the liberals argued, "It is only three weeks from the primaries. The time is too short. You can't educate the people to what Roosevelt is in that time. . . . It is political suicide to name him. . . . We are for principles, not personalities." Another got up, "We want to get to Chicago and make speeches before the national convention, like we are making here. . . ."

Finally, a motion was made to refer the plank to the executive committee of ten for reformulation. The motion was carried and what seemed like a head-on collision averted. Then the work really began. Leaders of opposing groups met in caucus and argued and debated until 3:30 a.m., finally arriving at a formulation which condemned the pro-war policies of "President Roosevelt and the Roosevelt administration," opposed "the nomination of Roosevelt or any other candidate dedicated to the war policies herein complained of." On the following day the draft plank was submitted for final approval to the convention, and in a scene of great enthusiasm adopted with one lone dissenting voice. Before the voting took place, Patterson himself appeared and assured the delegates he would stand by any platform they drafted.

The full implications of the convention vote were not lost upon its leaders. There was general realization that a parting of the ways with Roosevelt presaged an imminent parting of the ways with the Democratic Party. Rube Borough, convention keynoter, said:

> If in this convention we are not concerned with the fate of individual leaders, neither are we concerned with the fate of partisan political organizations. In a similar statewide meeting there was spontaneous and overwhelming endorsement of the statement that this people's movement which we represent recreated the Democratic Party in California in the political uprisings of 1934 and later. And there was enthusiastic concurrence in the declaration that we can march out of that Democratic Party in organized, orderly fashion and leave it the mere hollow shell it was before our entrance.
>
> Again we must remind ourselves that this people's movement in California, at least, is not a partisan Democratic movement. It never was. It never can be.

Borough's remarks pointed to an important factor which facilitates the development of a peace party in California. For four decades the Democratic Party in California was a hopeless minority, manipulated by several unprincipled political machines. In 1932 California was swept by the national tide and Roosevelt defeated Hoover. This occurred *despite* the party machine in the state. It was not until 1934 and the EPIC campaign that there was a mass influx into the Democratic Party and the creation of virile Democratic organizations with popular appeal. Upton Sinclair ran on his EPIC program in opposition to the McAdoo-Creel machine in the state and the Roosevelt-Farley machine in Washington. They both knifed the EPIC movement and contributed to its defeat.

In 1936 again there was a division between the old-line machine and the new militant forces in the party. While they both supported Roosevelt, the old EPICs formed their own independent ticket in opposition to an Olson-McAdoo combination. In the 1938 election of Governor Olson, the first Democratic governor in forty years, again the independent forces played the decisive role. In finally splitting with the Roosevelt regime, these elements are, as Borough said, taking the heart out of the Democratic Party in California.

Even before the Upton Sinclair campaign the California electorate exhibited great susceptibility to third party movements. In 1912 Theodore Roosevelt, running on an independent ticket, defeated both Wilson and Taft. In 1924 the elder LaFollette, running on the Progressive ticket, received four times as many votes as the Democratic nominee, although he trailed far behind Coolidge, the Republican candidate.

These traditions plus present-day realities are helping shape California's peace party. A decisive difference between the present movement and the EPIC sweep of 1934 is that today labor is participating as an organized and independent force through Labor's Non-Partisan League. If it were not for labor's participation, the movement might bog down into some of the morass that tripped the Sinclair campaign, and certainly it would not measure up to the responsibilities of contemporary history. But labor is not only participating; it is leading. Therein lies the hope of the movement.

The country will closely watch the California primaries. They will provide a significant gauge of the new currents in American political life, an estimate as to what degree the people's opposition to war has taken on organized and conscious expression.

AL RICHMOND.

## Roosevelt Then and Now

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S speech to the Young Democratic Clubs reads like a belated—and thoroughly spurious—attempt to recapture the liberal glamor of the New Deal. It was too patently an electioneering effort. In January, at the Jackson Day dinner, he figuratively put his arm around the Republican reactionaries, called them "grand fellows," and united as his personal heroes Jefferson and Hamilton. In his latest talk the President sought once more to pose as the spokesman of genuine liberalism and urged that the Democratic Party "nominate a liberal pair of candidates, running on a liberal and forward-looking platform." He also quoted various speeches he had made in the past, when he was still fighting for the New Deal program.

There was one speech, however, which the President failed to quote. That was the one he made a year ago to the Young Democratic Clubs. On April 19, 1939, he said:

> In the campaign we are now approaching there is just one agency potent enough to defeat the Democratic Party, and that is the Democratic Party itself. It can commit suicide by abandonment of the policies that brought it to power.

The Democratic Party under Roosevelt's leadership has abandoned those policies. It is offering the people the "ersatz Republicanism" against which he had warned. In the speech of a year ago he also told the tories in his own party to subordinate their prejudices or get out. Today he has surrendered to those prejudices and is making common cause with those same tories. Roosevelt's new address to the young Democrats underlines a great betrayal.

## Place Your Orders Early

THERE seems to be a great demand for small nations in need of defense. Belgium is, as might be expected, worried by the developments in Scandinavia. According to the New York *Post,* April 11, the Belgians "are determined to maintain neutrality at all costs. Strangely enough, Belgium's fear today seems to be caused by the possibility that the Allies may raise their demands or urge them to appeal for assistance immediately."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# I Attended the French Trials

## The first eyewitness story in America. Philippe Deval describes how the thirty-five Communist deputies turned the tables on their accusers. "Mon colonel" turns judge.

*Paris via Switzerland (by mail).*

ALL the forces of law and order of France seemed to be assembled at the Palais de Justice that morning, the morning of March 20, 1940. Outside, the gendarmes were thicker than usual on the ground, while the plainclothes detectives (unmistakable by their hats, their shoes, their expressions) strolled about in groups of twos and threes. Inside the Palais an army of black-helmeted guards, soldiers, and yet more plainclothes men. This formidable array had been mustered by the authorities in case of trouble; it was the opening morning of the long awaited trial of the forty-four Communist deputies, thirty-five of whom had been arrested six months before and kept in prison ever since.

A popular demonstration might have been expected, though under conditions in France today this was not very likely; but in fact the precautions were needless. The public waiting to go in consisted of friends and relations of the accused, with a few outside observers, like myself, anxious to see a trial without precedent in history.

The doors opened at 9:00 a.m. and I pushed in with the wives and families—some of the deputies' sons, aged two or three years old and less, had been brought along to see their fathers for the first time in six months—past the somewhat unwilling guards, up the marble stairs into the hall, the biggest room in the Palais (thanks to pressure upon the authorities who had originally proposed to use the very smallest in the place).

### PACKED COURTROOM

It was already three-quarters packed with people: at one end the members of the tribunal, in military uniform, along one side the jury, along the other the empty places of the accused, who appeared later. The body of the hall was full of barristers and lawyers in their black gowns, and beyond them scores of soldiers, civilians, and journalists. Between the relatives at the back and the court itself stands a row of soldiers carrying fixed bayonets on their guns. An atmosphere of excitement and suspense, and a general hubbub of voices which dies down to silence as the presiding judge appears to take his place with a salute from the soldiers, bayonets lifted high.

Colonel Gaffajoli is elderly, with a round red face and glasses; his name strikes one as somehow ludicrously apt. It is quite evident at the outset that he knows nothing whatever about legal procedure (a fact on which even the right wing French papers later commented). He begins by reading an admonition to the defense, in quite inaudible tones, to the effect that they are not to make "certain declarations," nor to mention "certain persons."

### *Let America Be Heard*

"AN HISTORIC bond of friendship and liberty exists between the American and French peoples. In the name of that bond and in the name of those common traditions we prize above all else, we call upon the government of the republic of France, if it persists in listing the desire for peace a crime, at least to provide for an open trial on the appeal of the forty-four Communist deputies—a trial to be held in the presence of the press and foreign observers"—this is the essence of an appeal published last week by a committee of forty noted writers, artists, and intellectuals, among them Theodore Dreiser, Rockwell Kent, Albert Maltz, Aline Bernstein, Reginald Marsh, Prof. J. Raymond Walsh, Dashiell Hammett, and Prof. Kirtley F. Mather.

"There is no precedent for such secrecy in the history of France; neither the czar in the 1914 trial of six Bolshevik deputies in the Duma, nor Hitler in the case of Dimitrov at Leipzig dared to keep a political trial in camera. In its reckless desperation, the Reynaud government has gone further: death penalties have been decreed for the possession or distribution of Communist propaganda; the guillotine has begun its work. Only last week, police arrested fifty-four Communists in Orleans, Toulon, Rouen, and Paris, among them a former editor of *l'Humanite;* they had been forced to use underground printing presses to make the voice of the Communist Party known—the third strongest party in France at the last election, polling a million and a half votes.

NEW MASSES urges its readers to join in the appeal to the French government for a public hearing on the case of the forty-four deputies; it urges telegrams and letters to the French ambassador, Count de Saint-Quentin, in Washington. This is the least we can do. It is only a fraction of our debt to the great people of France.

The defense, however, is not going to be helpful: Maitre Zevaes, the eldest of the defending lawyers, heavy, bearded, and rubicund, leaps to his feet, protesting vigorously:

> We have fifteen, twenty, thirty years of experience, and are well versed in criminal and military law; we know what rights we are entitled to. The defense is mistress of the debates, and we shall touch on all subjects and questions related to the case of our clients as we think fit!

The colonel bows to the forceful old lawyer; the audience has the impression that the latter will certainly get his way. Next comes the entry of the accused. They file in, thirty-five of them, escorted by almost as many uniformed guards, who seat themselves beside and among them. It is indeed an impressive array of "criminals." These leaders of the French working class march in as though they were taking their places in the Chamber of Deputies, with complete self-assurance, confidently, even cheerfully. One can hardly believe that they have been brought straight from their cells, from the appalling conditions of semi-darkness, cold, and hunger which we know they have suffered for months on end. They wave and signal to their wives and friends, who are now crammed solidly at the end of the hall, standing on tiptoe, elbowing and jostling each other to get a better view of husbands, brothers, fathers.

### THE DEFENDANTS

While we are trying to distinguish them—Florimond Bonte with his round, dark head; Midal, the secretary of the Union of Railway Workers, with his bush of gray hair; Prachay, deputy of Pontoise, with his long professorial beard and spectacles; tall Cristofol, and little Billoux, both of Marseilles—the proceedings go on with the reading of the list of witnesses.

The defense has called an imposing number—over a hundred—most of whom have appeared. Among them are many well known figures: Prof. Paul Langevin, Jean-Richard Bloch, the Cure Roubinet, and Pere Julerin, in their robes. Some have written asking to be excused, including Marcel Cachin, who is ill. M. Daladier and M. Bonnet have sent letters excusing themselves under the act of Parliament of 1812, which exempts ministers from appearing in public courts. "Are we still living under the empire?" interposes Maitre Zevaes, and there is a subdued titter from the audience, well aware that at this moment it is extremely doubtful whether M. Daladier is entitled to his immunity as a minister, his government having ceased to exist since the early hours of the morning.

M. Willard takes up the cudgels for the defense by demanding that M. Daladier appear.

> The president of the Council [he asserts] publicly branded our forty-four clients as traitors and enemy agents. He did so both on the wireless and in the Chamber. We state that nothing can be further from the truth, and we call on him to appear and withdraw his allegations.

The accused are charged with receiving orders from the Third International, he says, but who objected to their affiliation to the Third International when they took part in the Front Populaire in 1935-39? M. Daladier even asked them to participate in the government of the country. Why does he suddenly turn on them in September 1939? M. Willard goes on to quote the Yellow Book,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

p. 170, where M. Georges Bonnet on July 1, 1939, promises the German ambassador that in case of war "the Communists will be brought to book." Let M. Bonnet come here himself and explain and justify his statement, a statement made long before the German-Soviet pact was signed.

RED TAPE

The tribunal retires to consider these demands; after an hour, when the uniforms reappear, it is announced that the demands have been rejected. But after all this time spent on the question, it is rather a shock to everybody to hear that the procedure has been incorrect and that the whole business will have to be gone through again! The accused should have stated their views on the demands, and this had not been done. Colonel Gaffajoli is very annoyed. "You have not followed the regular procedure," he complains to M. Zevaes. "You should not have put your demands before the accused had given their identities."

"Pardon me, *mon colonel,*" Zevaes returns sweetly, "but it is you, not I, who are presiding."

Finally it is decided to start over again, and the accused are interrogated as to their names, addresses, and professions. A heated argument follows the first question, to Barel, who replies, "Deputy," when asked his profession.

JUDGE: You are not a deputy.
BAREL: Well, then deputy-unseated.
JUDGE: That is not a profession.
BAREL: It is a condition.

Angrily the judge goes on to the next, Berlioz. He gives the same answer. The judge is furious, but finally gives in, and allows them "ex-deputy," as each one insists on his right to the title, with Florimond Bonte proudly declaring, "Deputy of the glorious Faubourg St. Antoine—the constitution has been violated in pronouncing me unseated!"

The accused are invited to make comments on the depositions of their lawyer, which are read again, in shortened legal form. Several of them stand up to speak. My impression is of men hard as steel, strong as iron, whose minds are made up, who dominate the court, and crush the accusers with the force and conviction of their arguments. Each of them speaks in the tones that used to ring across the Chamber of Deputies, and across the crowds of workers at the huge open-air meetings. Every one is a popular leader with a real gift of speech, with deep-rooted convictions which he is accustomed to expressing; every one is determined not to lose his chance of voicing them now, after six months of enforced silence.

Each puts his reason for wanting Daladier to appear. Bonte, first, says that Daladier branded them as traitors. It is not they who are traitors, but those who encouraged Hitler in aggression at the time of the betrayal of Austria, of Czechoslovakia, of republican Spain. Let him come forward, and prove his accusations!

Renaud Jean speaks in a more personal vein of his service to France in the past. He also protests against being called a traitor: "If we are traitors, let him prove it and shoot us!"

Others—Barel, Demusois, Petit—speak in turn: their treatment from Daladier is unheard of for a "democratic" country—that in England there is still freedom of speech, the Communist newspaper is sold in the streets, that a Communist member sits in the House of Commons. Florimond Bonte proceeds to give an analysis of Daladier and his policy. "The Communists have always stood for peace, although they have been accused of conducting war politics in peacetime, and peace politics in wartime!"

When Albert Petit develops the same argument, speaking strongly on the subject of the British and French governments, Colonel Loriot feels bound to intervene: "I cannot let it be said in this court that our government and the British government did their best to prevent peace." The presiding judge is obviously delighted that someone has intervened, and takes the chance to insist that they cut their speeches short.

Zevaes remarks, to the delight of the audience, that "what distinguishes man from animals is the power of speech," and the speakers resume their platform. Lareppe, Cornavin, Martel, and Fajon speak, all equally telling and forceful in their arguments.

Straight from the front, still in uniform, Etienne Fajon, with hands in pockets, and the broadest of Provencal accents, defends himself against the "infamous accusation." He points out that he is quartermaster of a cavalry regiment, in charge of the instruction of seventy soldiers. "And they read in the newspaper that I am a traitor! What should they think of their instructor? As a matter of fact, neither the soldiers nor the officers believe this of me, knowing me as they do."

ACCUSERS ACCUSED

Others speak more briefly; but hammering home point after point, they have taken the role of accusers out of the hands of the tribunal, and the attack is launched all along the line. The colonels and captains are utterly bewildered and completely dominated; they feel that they have been put in the wrong, but do not know how to right themselves. They must be greatly relieved when 12:45 p.m. comes and they have the authority to close the speakers' mouths for the midday adjournment. After two hours' interval the hearing is resumed. There is an even bigger crowd than before. It is merely by chance and by bluff that a stranger can push into the back of the hall, to stand jammed in tight in the stifling heat of the room for nearly five hours.

The judge opens the proceedings by having the demands of the defense again deliberated. Of course they are rejected as before. The next item on the program is Colonel Loriot's request that the hearing take place behind closed doors, in *"huis clos."*

This has been expected. The battle to prevent it is the biggest event of the day. M. Zevaes launches the attack by declaring that it would be entirely illegal and unconstitutional to hold this trial in secret. "There is no precedent for a political trial taking place behind closed doors." The trials of Danton, of Babeuf, of Blanqui, were all held in public. Those of Lafargue, Deville, Louise Michel—all in public. The judge may say, "We are at war," but during the last war there was no case of a trial taking place in *"huis clos."* The Dreyfus case, at the turn of the century, was so disgracefully mishandled in camera that it provoked an international scandal and had to be tried again in public.

SECRET TRIAL PROTESTED

Zevaes finishes by challenging the tribunal with being afraid of the Communist Party, afraid of the truth's being told, afraid of their own defeat. M. Willard, a leading defense lawyer, protests to the judge against the *"huis clos."* These French citizens have been in prison for six months on an unfounded accusation. They have been accused in public and they have a right to defend themselves in public. He reads a long extract from the British *News Chronicle* (translated into French) which describes the treatment of the Communist deputies in La Sante, and which ends with a pained reproach at the suggestion of a trial in camera in democratic France. "We have to go to Hitler Germany to find this," says Willard. But he points out that even Dimitrov, at the Leipzig trial, had a public hearing. Was France to out-Hitler Hitler, at the very time when she was supposedly fighting for democracy against Hitlerism?

"If you pronounce the trial secret, the readers of tomorrow's newspapers, 150 years after the taking of the Bastille, will ask 'Are we still a democracy?'" The accused then speak for themselves, claiming their right to a public hearing with a persuasion which everyone in the audience thinks cannot fail to move the tribunal—yet, at the same time, everyone knows that it is not in fact this tribunal that is responsible, but much higher authorities outside the court.

Florimond Bonte, who drafted the letter to Herriot demanding that debate be held in the Chamber on the question of peace proposals in September, demands a public trial: he affirms that the letter has been brought in accusation against them with important passages omitted and the sense completely altered in some places. The judge protests, but several deputies support Bonte, crying *"C'est un faux!"* Bonte goes on to describe how, in constituting the Workers and Peasants Group after the dissolution of the Communist Party, they took every precaution to ascertain that the parliamentary group was perfectly legal and the procedure in its constitution absolutely correct: on this point they had the assurance of the very highest legal authorities.

Dr. Georges Levy in a loud voice claims: "We have been accused without being heard, by an utterly irregular law!" He states that the government in waging its imperialist war has used its special powers to suppress the Communists, who would have exposed the government and its anti-popular aims.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ambroise Croizat defies the decree of the Chamber as completely unconstitutional. "What does it matter if 492 votes in the Chamber unseat me when eleven thousand votes put me there?" He demands that they be heard by the people of France.

Barel demands a public hearing to prove that they are not the traitors which they have been branded; twenty-five years ago, he says, his leg was shot through on the battlefield, "... yet I am called a traitor to my country!" It is, he says, the prosecution who are the traitors, they are the representatives of the class which betrays the people of France. "What we want in this court is the trial of a class!" He insists on the rejection of the demand for closed doors. He tells how he has faithfully carried out his duties as a private citizen and as a public administrator; when responsible for the civil defense of his constituency, the Alpes Maritimes, he equipped the towns and taught the mayors to organize their defense measures, and he protested against the sending of war material from France to Italy (then a potential enemy) while Daladier and his friends, the accusers, were betraying the people by signing pacts with Mussolini.

Cornavin speaks with tremendous fire and vigor; he defends the Soviet Union and justifies the Soviet-German pact, denouncing those who refused to sign the Anglo-French-Soviet agreement and so brought war upon themselves. He justifies the Soviet action in Finland, and claims that it is not for those who abandoned democratic Spain to pose as champions of democracy anywhere. He denounces the suggested intervention in Finland by an Allied crusade headed by the ex-czarist officer General Mannerheim.

Cornavin finally demands an open trial so as to justify himself before the people of France. He states that there are traitors, real traitors sitting in the Chamber—deputies who were present at the Nuremberg Rally, who were, and remain, openly pro-Hitler, and who are still deputies!

Fajon speaks of the unlawful suppression of the Communist Party and of the militant trade unions. Jouhaux has tried to reform the latter, but out of 800,000 members of the union he represents, Fajon says, "he has only got five thousand!" He pours scorn and fury on the tribunal, "afraid of the truth," he tells them, and ends with the solemn warning, "Gentlemen, beware the anger of the workers!"

Billoux, Midal, Prachay, and others in turn claim their right to a public trial to clear themselves before the people of France. They each invoke the inevitable victory of Communism—"Capitalism is eventually bound to be submerged by the flood!" They invoke the French proletariat, calling on them as the only judges they recognize: "If you will not let the people of France hear us justify ourselves, we know, and they will know, that it is because you want to hide the truth from them."

The judge at first tries to stop the flood of oratory—*"Soyons prudents, messieurs, soyons prudents!"*—and attempts to restrain the speakers from their political explanations by calling them back to the subject of the *"huis clos"*; to which they retort that they are speaking very much to the point—the question of a public or secret hearing is definitely a political question.

The tribunal is very ill at ease; the audience, including the soldiers and gendarmes, are listening open-mouthed, drinking in every word of this forbidden language. The accused have obtained a platform, and they are using it to launch a smashing attack on their accusers. Anybody would think they were indeed the prosecution. They follow the example of Dimitrov in "taking and keeping the initiative," and illustrate his words that "a revolutionary and political defense is the right and only defense." We are reminded throughout their speeches of Dimitrov, the supreme example of political defense, and also of their heroic French predecessors: Babeuf, who in 1797 declared before the High Court of France:

> It is to the people that I address my defense! . . . We must speak as if the people of France were present here: it is before them that we justify ourselves. . . . This is not a trial of individuals—it is the trial of the republic. . . . Our act [the act of reconstituting a secret committee, of which Babeuf was accused] belongs to the republic, to the Revolution, to history. I must defend it.

We are reminded of Blanqui: "I am not before judges, but enemies; it is useless for me to defend myself . . . the role of *accuser* is the *only one suited to the oppressed.*" We are reminded of the Paris Communards in 1870. We feel that these thirty-five men are worthy of the great traditions of their predecessors and that even though the trial may be held in secret henceforward, their voices have been heard today far beyond the court of the Palais de Justice and have given encouragement and faith to those who believe in their ideals in times of almost universal repression.

And even those who do not share the ideas of the men in the dock leave after hearing them with a feeling that they have won a battle which they deserved to win. The *"huis clos,"* which is ordered at 8:00 p.m. by the exhausted and harassed colonels, is an admission that they could not afford to allow the truth to be heard: it is a real confession of defeat.

PHILIPPE DEVAL.

*The following dispatch arrived a day later, by separate mail, reporting the first events of the secret session of the trial of the French Communist deputies.*—THE EDITORS.

At last the witnesses, of whom many have come from distant parts of the country and have been waiting for ten days to give evidence for the Communist deputies, are being heard in the secret trial in the Palais de Justice. The witnesses for the prosecution have already been heard. The whole of Thursday was devoted to them; but this morning the defending lawyers present "conclusions" stating that the events to which they testified all took place in the Palais de Bourbon (Chamber of Deputies). Since the deputies at that time enjoyed complete immunity, therefore the evidence of these witnesses should be regarded as null and void. The tribunal retire to consider these conclusions, and, strange to relate, for once they accept them! Therefore the evidence against the accused will not be honored.

MARCEL CACHIN

Then come the witnesses for the defense, some of them among the best known men of science and literature in France. Although they speak in a closed court, rumors rapidly spread in the passages outside. It is whispered that when Marcel Cachin entered the court there was a spontaneous demonstration by the accused, who rose to their feet in silence. Cachin is of course the popular veteran leader of the Communist movement in France, former senator, and universally known. He has come from Brittany in spite of grave illness to give evidence for the accused. When he reappears outside after speaking for nearly an hour, women and children rush to greet him, women kiss and embrace him with tears on their cheeks.

The second defense witness is Professor Langevin, friend of Albert Einstein, and of M. and Mme. Curie, the most eminent French scientist of our day. He is followed by M. Jean-Richard Bloch, well known writer and critic. It is obviously impossible for the judges to listen to the declarations of these distinguished men without great attention and respect.

This afternoon the witnesses called include the Cure Roubinet—head of one of the biggest parishes in Paris. Speaking to friends he mentioned that the most Christian words he had ever heard were spoken by the Communist deputy, Berlioz, for whom he was testifying.

There were among the other witnesses M. l'Abbe Heral, of the Eglise de la Mission, a well known missionary from Kenya; Prof. Henri Wallon, a professor of psychoanalysis; and M. Renoult, the mayor of a Paris commune, who has been for several weeks in one of the French concentration camps for militant trade unionists at Chateau Bailly, and who was brought to the court from the Chateau escorted by two guards! There are still many witnesses to be heard, but tomorrow the judges are taking a holiday and the proceedings will be resumed on Sunday morning.

P. D.

## Clipper Skips Bermuda

—nor rain, nor snow,
nor hail, nor blow
can stop what you have written.

the United States
delivers mail

—by permission of Great Britain

A. LACEY.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Nylon: Mr. du Pont Turns Silkworm

## A "proteinlike chemical product" for your pretty leg. A boon for womankind but a headache for the Japanese silk producers. Aside to the missus: "Nylon runs as fast as silk."

IF SCIENCE has been unable to make silk purses out of sows' ears, it has succeeded in fabricating them out of coal, air, and water and filling them with shiny gold pieces to boot. For the much publicized Nylon is about to make its formal debut. In the form of Exton it has already been on the market in tooth and hair brush bristles. In transparent suspenders and belts it has graced manly shoulders and waistlines. But on May 15 Nylon full fashioned hosiery goes on sale in a limited number of department stores and specialty shops. Only their best customers will know that, because the stores are pledged not to advertise their precious acquisition until June 1. The chances are that few stores will proclaim their wares because such small quantities are being doled out that the stocks will be sold out before you can say "polymerization."

Nylon is at once a copywriter's inspiration, a miracle of modern scientific research, a prize example of monopoly domination, and a potential headache for Japanese silk producers, American cotton farmers, and the hosiery industry.

### NO MIRACLES

To yield to the importunities of the fair sex, let it be said at once that a pair of two-thread or three-thread Nylon stockings look very nice—on pretty legs. Nylon will run just as fast as silk, if not faster. Nylon stockings can snag just as readily. But with ordinary good care, gentle rinsing, good shoes, and not too violent a record of stocking wear, Nylon hose will outwear silk. Some amazing records of long wear have been widely publicized, but both du Pont and the department stores warn that miracles are not to be expected. The technocrat's dream of permanent stockings has not been realized. Keep in mind that the increase in sales of women's full fashioned hosiery from 6,324,000 dozen pairs in 1914 to 43,078,000 dozen pairs in 1939 has come about not only as a result of the lowering in price but also because of the increasing perishability of the product. The ten-thread stockings of 1914 have been replaced by the gossamer, evanescent, wispy, sheer two-threads and three-threads of 1940. They are making Nylon stockings sheer so that they will wear out more quickly. There are, however, certain characteristics of the yarn that make it impractical in heavy weights. If Nylon is perfected and the "wrinkles" overcome, a five-thread Nylon stocking may bankrupt the hosiery industry and throw out of work a large number of the 92,000 workers in the full fashioned division.

One unpleasant feature of Nylon hosiery is its cold, "clammy" feel on the leg. That is due to the very low capacity of the fiber to absorb water. For this reason Nylon dries very rapidly.

Technically speaking, Nylon is a "man-made, proteinlike chemical product (polyamide) which may be formed into fibers, bristles, sheets, and other forms which are characterized when drawn by extreme toughness, elasticity, and strength." It should be understood that Nylon is not one particular chemical compound; it is a family of related compounds, each formula being developed for the particular need to be served. Research chemists in the du Pont laboratories developed Nylon as a result of their studies of "giant" molecules such as are found in rubber, cellulose, and resins. Without going into the history or chemistry of its development, it can be added that the new fiber has a higher degree of elasticity than any textile fiber in common use, great tensile strength, toughness, and abrasion strength.

In addition to other uses, Nylon has been found to have the properties of a good insulating material and experiments are under way to use Nylon coating as insulation on wiring in electrical apparatus. This will affect silk, cotton, and rubber consumption in the electrical industry if and when it is perfected.

The manufacturing process for Nylon is similar to that of rayon. The molten Nylon is forced through spinnerets, which are cups with fine holes at the bottom, and as the filaments strike the cool air outside they "freeze" solid instantly. In the $10,000,000 plant which du Pont has erected at Seaford, Del., Nylon is made with a minimum of manpower. Says *Textile Age,* "Electrical instruments on panels guide the process with minute precision, and robot observers signal with flashing lights and chimes." This plant will reach a capacity output of four million pounds a year and at peak production will employ only about 850 workers. Here is still another example of a new industry without the capacity to rescue capitalism from its quicksands.

### THE PRICE

With Nylon hosiery yarn selling currently at about $4.50 a pound, du Pont will not have to wait long before its experimental costs and investment in plant and machinery are repaid with a handsome and mounting profit. At today's prices Nylon stockings have to retail at $1.15 and $1.35 a pair with no more than a normal manufacturing profit. Du Pont is getting all the gravy. Later on, when Nylon has been established as a "quality" product, the price will undoubtedly be reduced and the biggest hosiery market, the 59, 69, 79 cent price ranges, will be permitted to buy Nylon.

In the meantime du Pont has every manufacturer tied up under the strictest agreements. Their selling prices are fixed. They may not combine Nylon with other yarns. A competitive yarn known as Vinyon has been developed by the Union Carbon & Carbide Co., but strangely enough, since the initial publicity on it appeared it has not been available. One may wonder why such solicitude is exhibited toward the du Pont product.

At the present rate of production Nylon will replace only about 10 percent of the raw silk imported into the United States for full fashioned hosiery. Since Nylon is used in the sheerer stockings only, for which the highest and most expensive grades of silk are required, this will represent closer to a 15 percent loss in dollars to Japan. But when Nylon production doubles and trebles, the havoc it will create in Japanese cash balances in the United States will be disastrous. Keep in mind that raw silk is Japan's chief cash "crop" and a major source of dollar exchange.

Already anticipation of the arrival of Nylon hosiery is blamed for the sharp decline in hosiery shipments to the stores and the consequent slowing up of hosiery production. This has, in turn, affected the price of raw silk and, together with other factors, has been responsible for a drop of almost $2 a pound since the highs of January 1940.

### COTTON EXPORTS AFFECTED

One fact is that Japan is already switching some of its cotton purchases to Egypt, Brazil, and other countries. When Nylon is produced to sell in popular-priced hosiery, we may look forward to a decline in Japanese purchases of American cotton, and Japan is today one of the leading buyers on the American cotton exchanges.

A tougher, more elastic fiber produced from Nylon will make stockings that will outwear silk two or three times. What that will mean to the American hosiery workers is not too difficult to foretell.

All hail to Science! Nylon is undoubtedly a wonderful achievement of modern chemistry. But capitalism which employs science to kill and maim and destroy in war puts its curse upon even the most innocent product of the laboratory.

STEFAN RADER.

## Animals First

A DOG'S life is more luxurious than an unemployed person's in Detroit, judging from the city's budget. In 1939 Detroit paid $83,640 for two hundred dogs lodged in the city pound, $100,000 for eleven hundred single jobless workers sheltered by the city—$413.20 a dog, $90.90 a person.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

William Gropper

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# How to Steal An Election

## ALP Progressives won the votes: the old guard "won" the State committee. Here is the exact blueprint of old guard strategy. Out-Tammanying Tammany.

APRIL 2 was Primary Day in New York. Major interest centered on the fight within the American Labor Party—a party which controlled the balance of power in the 1936 and 1938 elections, and which the right wing, old guard Socialist leadership had captured shortly after the outbreak of the war. But the interest wasn't merely local. The ability of the rank and file ALP voter to keep his party true to the platform of Labor's Non-Partisan League, to which it is affiliated, was going to have national repercussions. It might be a decisive influence in crystallizing America's long-overdue third party. Some sixty thousand men and women went to the polls. There was no doubt about the results: the Progressive Committee to Rebuild the American Labor Party had scored a heavy popular majority. Its major strength was downstate, which is only reasonable since 136,000 of the party's 150,000 members live downstate. Outstanding politicians of the right wing faction, such as Alex Rose, Julius Hochman, Paul Blanshard, Dorothy Kenyon and others were defeated in their own assembly districts. ALP members were happy. At last, it seemed, their party was free of those influences blocking its path in the crucial year of 1940. And yet, on April 13, a convention was held to elect members of the new state committee. The old guard, defeated by its members, and repudiated in its own assembly districts, chose the entire slate from its own crowd. How did it happen? asks the humble member of the ALP. The answer is a story of gerrymandering, railroading, and political fraud that would make Tammany Tiger's tactics appear kittenish.

### GERRYMANDER

In upstate New York the ALP membership comprises about fourteen thousand members, or 9 percent of the total and the old guard faction in office was still able to poll a majority there. Quickly, before the controversy clarified itself to most of the members, the old guard slipped through at the January state convention (preceded by no primary and attended by delegates picked long before) a measure weighting the basis of representation at the forthcoming primary heavily in favor of upstate voters.

New York State law provides that representatives to a party convention may be chosen on the basis of any uniform, legal electoral district. Previously ALP state committeemen had been elected, twenty from each *national congressional district*. This procedure, though somewhat favoring upstate with its low ALP membership in each district, still gave the great mass of members downstate a majority of the committeemen. The Rose crowd's maneuver changed the electoral basis to the *state assembly districts,* which had the practical effect of empowering the upstate voters to elect 440 committeemen, while downstate voters were allowed only 310 committeemen. Only about two thousand members actually voted in the primaries upstate, and about 53,000 voted downstate. Therefore, 3 percent of the voters elected 59 percent of the committeemen, and 97 percent of the voters elected only 41 percent of the committeemen. One upstate member's vote was worth the votes of forty downstate members. Even though the progressives swept the downstate election, they could not win without heavy upstate support.

The old guard poured thousands of dollars into the upstate districts. High-pressure organizers contacted every voter. The money came from a slush fund contributed mostly from the treasuries of the ILGWU and the *Jewish Daily Forward*. The members of the ILGWU, whose money was used, were not consulted in the matter by Dubinsky. After the votes were cast and the committeemen designated, the old guard campaign became still more lavish. Many of the elections in upstate districts had not been contested, and the elected committeemen were not committed to either side. It was important to win them over.

Committeemen were wined and dined. Their expenses to the convention in New York City were advanced on a luxurious scale. Even more eagerly sought than their presence were their proxies.

The Progressive Committee, with its comparatively small war chest, could not compete with a lavish campaign had it so desired. It did, however, get in touch with each committeeman and by persuasion swung many to its side. Many committeemen who could not afford a trip to the city handed their proxies to Progressive leaders. Others had earlier, almost automatically, given proxies to the existing state leadership during the old guard's whirlwind campaign. According to law, the proxy with the latest date is the only one that counts. The Progressives faced the convention with a majority of the votes and proxies.

The Dubinsky-Rose clique, banking on its prestige as the committeemen in office but losing influence day by day, had foreseen this situation. It countered with a crassly illegal maneuver. Datelines on old guard proxies were left blank at the time of signing. Just before the convention the latest date at which the proxy might possibly have been signed was filled in, effectively shutting out any contrary proxy meanwhile issued to someone else. In this way invalidated proxies in the hands of the Rose leadership were made to appear valid, and valid proxies held by the Progressives were thrown out. The Progressives challenged 125 old guard proxies, about sixty of them for this reason. Most of these blank checks bore the date of the convention or of the preceding day. Field workers in the election campaign pointed out that it was manifestly impossible that so many committeemen could have been persuaded to change their proxies a second time in the thirty-six hours before the doors of the convention opened.

In the Broadway Theater, where the convention was held, six paid employees of the state office sat at a table and acted as a credentials committee, passing on the validity of each proxy offered. They were marshaled by Lester Rosner, Alex Rose's office assistant. Mechanically they rejected proxy after proxy submitted by Progressives. One Progressive leader had secured eleven proxies; all were turned down. He got one vote, his own. The same employees of the Rose machine okayed 125 old guard proxies challenged by the Progressives. Control of this key machinery allowed the old guard to vote not only their illegal proxies, but proxies that had never existed. Credentials were made out in advance in the state office for all elected committeemen. But some committeemen neither attended the convention nor made out proxies. Those handling credentials distributed these left-over credentials among henchmen of Dubinsky and Rose. When one of these absentee credentials was challenged during the crucial roll call late that night, the person voting it would airily reply that the proxy establishing his right to vote was in the hands of the credentials committee, which had left all the proxies in an unalphabetized pile two feet high. When an old guardsman claimed a doubtful proxy, it was necessary to inspect every proxy in the pile to prove him a liar. The old guard leaders, running the meeting from the platform, heeded no protests but swept inexorably through the roll call.

If by chance a name was read and no one answered, there was a commotion in the old guard ranks: "Who has Doake's proxy? Somebody must have it." And sure enough it would be found that some old guardsman did have it.

### STRANGE VOTE

That the voting was a farce is best illustrated by the fact that when the meeting began, after all credentials had supposedly been checked, Frank Monaco, old guard chairman of the credentials committee, announced that exactly 687 committeemen were represented in person or by proxy and entitled to vote. Yet after the roll call the old guard claimed victory by a score of 417-319—a total of 736 votes cast!

Progressives estimated that the actual number of votes legally cast was 710, including all challenged and doubtful proxies. This would

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have given the old guard victory by a margin of only forty-two votes, 376-334. An honest decision on each of the 125 challenged old guard proxies, moreover, the Progressives declared, would have given them a majority.

An overwhelming number of the elected committeemen personally present at the convention favored the Progressives. The whole procedure of voting by proxy at a party convention, it was pointed out, is probably illegal and certainly dubious from an ethical standpoint. Proxies are an invention of large scale capital to facilitate the management of corporations. A man who owns stock in a business may delegate his voting rights to someone else. But democratically elected representatives of the people in legislative bodies such as Congress and state assemblies have never been allowed to delegate their mandates. They must attend in person or lose their vote. The old guard leadership is unquestionably guilty of trying to keep control of the ALP by the methods corporate directorates use to control their financial empires.

By these tactics the old guard elected Luigi Antonini state chairman on the only roll call vote held at the convention. Many committeemen, especially from upstate, had voted for Antonini to preserve unity in the party. They favored inclusion of one or more Progressives in the state leadership as well.

To force its whole slate into office, the old guard fell back on still cruder methods. Antonini as chairman refused to allow roll calls in the election of the state secretary and treasurer and called instead for a voice vote. For such a contingency the meeting had been heavily packed with old guardsmen. Proxies circulated by the state office bore printed names of several Dubinsky-Rose satellites, any one of whom was empowered to vote the proxy. In addition, there was a blank space where another name might be written in. Instead of issuing these proxies to their duly elected committeemen attending the convention, the old guard leaders wrote in the names of their stalwarts who had lost out in the primary, most of them in New York City. In that way many candidates who had been rejected by their own electorates were enabled at the discretion of the old guard leadership to attend the convention with voice and vote. The legality of this action will also be tested in the courts. Among these lame ducks were Morris Novik, director of WNYC, Paul Blanshard, moribund Socialist, Morris Ernst, ex-liberal, Dorothy Bellanca, lieutenant of Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and Louis Hollander, lieutenant of Dorothy Bellanca.

Old guardsmen were present not only as defeated candidates holding proxies, but in a multitude of "technical" capacities—as inspectors of credentials, ushers, doormen, or often with no apparent job except to shout and, when possible, vote. The number of persons present who voted illegally was estimated at more than two hundred. The theater pit, it was pointed out, holds 1,100 seats, and almost every one was filled, though old guard doormen were supposed to exclude rigorously every person not attending in some clearly defined capacity. The outsiders shouted loudly for the old guard slate, when, over Progressive protest, the vote was taken viva voce for the secretaryship, with Alex Rose opposing Progressive Eugene Connolly. In spite of this illegal assistance, Rose was clearly beaten. There could be no mistake that the greater number of voices spoke for Connolly.

Antonini, in the speaker's chair, was dumbfounded. He hesitated, did not know what to do, apparently was on the point of calling for a revote when two Dubinsky whips—Samuel Null, defeated in the ninth assembly district and Emil Schlesinger, defeated in the seventh district—rushed up to him shouting: "Declare Rose elected! Declare Rose elected!" Antonini hesitated a second more, then, in defiance of the vote, proclaimed Rose state secretary.

Amid the pandemonium that followed, Elmer Brown, president of the "Big Six" typographical local and Progressive candidate for treasurer, refused to run unless the vote were taken by roll call. This was refused, and old guard Andrew R. Armstrong was proclaimed treasurer. The convention broke up at 2:00 a.m.

The legality of the old guard procedure will of course be questioned in the courts. Meanwhile Antonini and Rose enjoy control of the state machinery of the ALP.

As a lesson in political machination the ALP convention was instructive. It was more important, however, as an illustration of the kind of political pressure progressives of all kinds are bound to face in opposing the forces driving toward war. The groups fighting for peace have had an object lesson. They must be on their guard. FRANK GOELET.

## Poem for the Birth of X

Among the casualty reports, while all
Our glittering statistics tell the bright
Success of death, intrepidly you come,
As welcome as an embassy for peace.

Not meteors nor blizzards in the spring
Will turn to legends on your date of birth,
Yet if this year will echo with your name
In some survival told beyond the guns,

Say, rather, it was torment that so rocked
The paralytic goodness of the race;
Say, rather, it was then the dynasties
Of greed cut trenches through the barren earth.

If, in those years that arch like rays of death,
You learn the stature of rebellious rage,
We, who share a war-born stance, who are
Its derelicted heirs, will understand.

Come, then, accept our broken well-meant hands;
Danger is lovely here, since we have learned
Fulfillment in the teeth of flame; be one
Who adds an acre to that territory

Named by history for some future text;
Your innocence we greet with gifts of love
As awkward as our unblessed youth . . . come,
Be beautiful and loud, be one of us.

JOHN MALCOLM BRINNIN.

## Footnotes to War Policy

THE refusal of the Treasury to recognize British "free sterling" is another example of Anglo-American commercial rivalry, despite close cooperation in foreign policy. By insisting that American importers cannot acquire the pound at the "free" rate of $3.50 but must pay for it at the official rate of $4.035, the Treasury strikes a heavy blow at British attempts to undersell American manufactures in the domestic market. Likewise, it undermines the British effort to undersell the United States in Latin-American markets through currency devaluation. While the Allies placed new cash orders for the latest American aircraft, the British government announced the further liquidation of 117 stocks held by British nationals in the American market, the second such measure to secure dollar exchange since last January. About $100,000,000 has thus far been raised. Both of these measures increase the reliance that the Allies have upon the United States. The greater this reliance, the closer the American people have been brought to war.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Rep. Voorhis: Dies' Man Friday

## The congressman from California competes with the congressman from Texas for honors. Mr. Voorhis: his past and present. A sad case of millionaire liberalism.

*Washington, D. C.*

IT HAS been a matter of concern to me for some time that Jerry Voorhis, Horace Jeremiah to be exact, has not received his due share of credit. In his year of service on the Dies committee he has easily eclipsed vice chairman Joe Starnes. Next to Martin Dies himself he is its most active and important member. The most far-reaching legislation it has drafted bears his name. And yet Dies has maintained a monopolistic stranglehold on publicity emanating from the committee. This is manifestly unfair.

Jerry is something of an old-time Social Democrat of the millionaire variety. His father made his money as an automobile sales manager, banker, and real estate investor in the fertile lands of California. Jerry now has about a million or so salted away in his own right. After completing his education at Yale he toured Germany for the YMCA. He is very proud of the time he worked for Ford, handled freight on a railroad, and was a cowboy in Wyoming. For a long time he was a teacher in various private schools. Later he became the headmaster of the Voorhis School for underprivileged boys where sixty youngsters were supposed to "learn from living the fundamentals of Christian citizenship." In Jerry's biography in the *Congressional Directory* he says that he is a lay reader in the Episcopal church and that his "hobbies are boys, baseball, and American history." A hobby he forgot to include is his devotion to monetary reform as the cure-all for all social ills.

### ONETIME SOCIALIST

For many years Jerry was one of the shining lights in the Socialist Party of California. Then in 1934 Upton Sinclair's EPIC movement swept the state and Jerry plunged into Democratic politics. He ran for the legislature and was defeated. In 1936 he was elected to Congress from a district that includes some of the richest orange groves in the state, some of the lowest paid farm workers, and an industrial section in Los Angeles. The wealthy orange growers, who attacked him bitterly as a dangerous radical in 1936, now look upon his work on the Dies committee with increasing sympathy.

In 1939 there were four leading liberal contenders for the vacancy on the re-created Dies committee; Abe Murdock of Utah, John Coffee of Washington, Joseph W. Byrns of Tennessee, and Jerry Voorhis. Byrns was selected at a meeting of the liberal bloc as its official candidate. Jerry was named one of the members of a committee to communicate this choice to Speaker Bankhead. Jerry spoke to Bankhead himself, and came away with the job. Several congressmen felt that Jerry had double-crossed his colleagues. The liberal bloc was badly shaken for a time. Byrns quit the group in protest and turned into a routine and very reactionary Southern politician. Jerry tried to explain that the speaker had insisted that he was the only man for the job.

So Jerry became the representative of the House liberals on the Dies committee. He started, long before the outbreak of the war in Europe, with a violent anti-Communist bias. He retained his contacts with the old guard Socialists. A couple of years ago he agreed enthusiastically with Louis Waldman at a Camp Tamiment forum that no united front of any kind ought to be tolerated with Communists. In his first months on the committee he Red-baited with the best of them. Occasionally he protested mildly against the familiar Dies procedure. Then he stopped saying practically anything at all.

When the Dies committee published the list of Washington members of the American League for Peace and Democracy, Jerry at first voted against this step. Later, in order not to split the harmony of the committee, he changed his vote and approved. When the issue came up on the floor of the House, Rep. Clare Hoffman of Michigan and other labor-baiters defended the committee by quoting Jerry to show that the American League was nothing but a Communist front. The man who was to fight Dies from within turned into a valuable liberal front for the committee. Recently Voorhis told newspapermen off the record that he thought the committee was making a terrible mistake in going through with contempt proceedings against Communist leaders who refused to divulge the names of party members. That was Jerry's way of trying to clear his skirts. Actually he voted for the five contempt motions passed so far.

Jerry has been so busy combating the Communist menace, that he has never got around to doing anything about Father Coughlin and the miscellaneous fascist and anti-Semitic groups. In April 1939 Harry Bridges presented Voorhis with documented proof concerning the operations of Nazi agents on the West Coast. Bridges was a "notorious radical," and the administration had not yet turned spy scares, whether based on fact or not, into a popular pastime. Jerry wouldn't touch the evidence. When fascist witnesses appeared before the Dies committee his chief effort was to try to prove his favorite thesis that Communism and fascism are really identical. William Dudley Pelley wouldn't stand for it; he told Jerry he was in complete accord not with the Communists but with the Dies committee.

Last summer Jerry was appointed head of a subcommittee to find Pelley. Here was a real chance to do something about anti-Semitic agitation. Jerry hired David Mayne, Washington representative of the Silver Shirts, to hunt up his chief. Voorhis paid him secretly in cash instead of with committee vouchers. Mayne didn't find Pelley, but he turned up with a beautiful frame-up designed to smear Gardner Jackson of Labor's Non-Partisan League and Harold Weisberg, who were investigating the committee's ties with fascist groups. Mayne sold Weisberg a large number of genuine letters by Pelley—and a few forgeries. When Rep. Frank Hook of Michigan put some of these letters in the Congressional Record, Mayne proclaimed that he had forged them. He admitted publicly that he had conferred with Rhea C. Whitley, former Dies committee counsel, at the time when he was passing off the forged letters and that he had tipped off a committee member—who apparently never even dreamed of stopping Mayne's fraud—just before Hook put the letters in the Record. Many Congressmen felt that the committee was up to its ears in the whole mess, but Jerry made a speech whitewashing Whitley as well as all members of the committee and its staff. Jerry had hired Mayne in the first place. Whether unwittingly or not, he was a party to the whole frame-up.

### "THE LEGAL WAY"

But Jerry's greatest achievements as a Dies committee member have been in the field of legislation. After Dies acclaimed the outlawing of the Communist Party in France, he enthusiastically suggested the same procedure in the United States. Jerry, however, warned that the job must be done legally. In California Jerry had made speeches against the state criminal syndicalism law. Last session he voted for the drastic McCormack criminal syndicalism bill. Jerry is for suppression now—if it can be done in a legal way. Dies of course believes in legal as well as illegal methods and he has been glad to cooperate.

A couple of weeks ago Jerry was unanimously chosen by the committee to work out legislative proposals in consultation with the Departments of Justice and State. He is ideally suited for this liaison work with the administration. Dies went too far in attacking the President and government officials. The old wounds have not yet healed. Jerry, on the other hand, is close to the White House. As long ago as last October he was one of the chief figures in an informal little meeting attended by Dies, SEC Chairman Jerome Frank, Assistant Secretary of State Adolph Berle and Civil Liberties Union Counsel Morris Ernst. The meeting had the purpose of arranging an understanding between the Dies committee and the administration as well as with the Red-baiting liberals of the Ernst variety.

Discussed at this genial gathering was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ernst's proposal for an "SEC of ideas"—to make organizations suspected of subversive activities register complete statements with the State Department. Jerry has introduced a bill to put this plan into effect. He is now negotiating on behalf of the committee for official administration support. Dies likes the idea but isn't sure that he wants Jerry to get the credit. So he is thinking of putting in a bill of his own along the same lines. Jerry's bill would apply to any organization "whose policies, or any of them, are determined by or in collaboration with a foreign government or an officer or citizen of a foreign state or an agency dominated by a foreign government" or "whose purpose it is to aid or further, or that does aid or further, the cause of a foreign government or a political group in a foreign country." Any group so designated would have to file a complete list of its members, detailed financial statements, and other information.

Dies has been trying to get hold of Communist Party membership lists by staging raids on party headquarters. Jerry has never objected the least bit to this procedure, but his heart's desire would be a law to accomplish the same purpose. The sweeping character of the Voorhis-Ernst bill is obvious. Organizations which helped loyalist Spain could easily be included. It would be simple to charge anti-war groups with aiding foreign governments. Certainly the Catholic Church, the YWCA, the Red Cross and the International Chamber of Commerce work out policies in collaboration with officials of foreign governments. *Commonweal,* the Catholic weekly, has already denounced the bill.

But Jerry's latest effort is mildness itself compared with a bill which he introduced on Sept. 25, 1939. He would now prefer to have it quietly forgotten. This measure would make it

> Unlawful for any person who has filed a registration statement with the secretary of state . . . to disseminate in any public manner whatsoever, whether directly or through any other person, by public utterance or through written or printed material of any kind, any information or propaganda on behalf of any foreign principal.

The potentialities of this little legislative gem are breathtaking. All foreign books and movies could at once be banned. Nor would it be difficult under this law to consider as foreign agents magazines and organizations dealing with international affairs and have them outlawed. Senator Reynolds and Representative Dies have never proposed anything more directly suppressive.

WEAK-KNEED LIBERALISM

Jerry looks very boyish, much younger than his thirty-nine years. He has a frank, open countenance—which is constantly wreathed in perplexed frowns. To his more critical friends, he has said that his trouble is that he is a slow thinker, that he can't keep up with the smart, reactionary lawyers in the House. It is only fair to admit that Jerry's mind is no lightning calculator. But stupidity is not an adequate explanation for his conduct. Whether Jerry likes it or not, he has come to stand for something very definite in American political life. He is the epitome, the very quintessence of weak-kneed liberalism in the service of reaction.

ADAM LAPIN.

A. Ajay

*"I suggest you investigate the Christian Front. The drop in membership is appalling."*

## Logan-Walter Dynamite

HOUSE passage of the Logan-Walter bill to subject decisions of 130 federal agencies to court review was reported in the press as just target practice for this week's firing on the Wage-Hour and Wagner acts. The measure smells more like dynamite than gunpowder. Virtually every federal regulatory agency ever established—including the National Labor Relations Board, Wage-Hour Administration, Securities and Exchange Commission, Pure Food and Drug Administration, and Federal Power Commission—would be crippled by litigation and judicial negation of these agencies' functions. To the courts, which are generally inclined to baby big business at the people's expense, would fall unprecedented administrative and legislative powers. "Vicious" is a comparatively rare word in House debate, but Representative Ford of California could hardly have found a better one to describe this piece of proposed legislation. So drastic is the bill, in fact, that it isn't expected to pass the Senate and, if it does, the President will probably veto it. It should be pointed out, however, that the House vote, 279 to 97, on this extraordinary measure is not unrelated to Mr. Roosevelt's retreat from New Dealism.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The 30 Cent Debate

## Representative Barden and his "Work More, Eat Less" amendment. More than 14,500,000 Americans come under the scope of the Wages-Hour law.

*Washington, D. C.*

THE Department of the Interior Building faces Potomac Park; from its doorstep you can see the Washington Monument from base to tip. On Sunday evening the park is restful; the great square building with its wide corridors and marble hall is quiet. A guard paces up and down the entrance hall. Only on the eighth floor, beneath the roof, is there activity. There, the other Sunday evening, in a charming room of comforting browns and grays, lighted cleverly from glazed panels in the ceiling, sat four congressmen and a senator. They were gathered about a long tapestry-covered table. In their midst was an alert, sweet-faced woman with gray hair.

She was Josephine Roche, former assistant secretary of the treasury, who came from Denver several years ago with the liberal gospel which the New Deal was preaching until war diverted Mr. Roosevelt. At one end of the table sat Sen. James E. Murray of Montana, another old New Dealer. These two were engaged in a radio duel of wits and tactics with three spokesmen of monopoly who were defending amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act, popularly known as the Wages and Hour law.

I was fortunate enough to be present at the radio debate that Sunday evening. You may have heard it on the radio, too. I saw the faces, witnessed the byplay of the chief actors. For one hour I was entranced by the drama. Then, as I met several of the political thespians, heard their comment after the microphones were dead, the tragedy of politics in Washington today hit me between the eyes. It is tragedy: the way the government of the United States and the elected representatives of the people are meeting the problem of "fair labor standards" for the most poorly paid, most overworked citizens.

### AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Bespectacled Rep. Graham A. Barden of North Carolina sat at the extreme right of the table facing Senator Murray. Mr. Barden, red-necked, gray-haired, firm-jawed, took notes as the Montana liberal explained that the Wages and Hour law had never had a fair trial. "It's just eighteen months old," said Murray. "The only issue is—should any American citizens work for less than 30 cents an hour?" He accused Barden of seeking to foist industrial peonage upon American workers, of trying to split farmers from labor by pretending that the Wages and Hour law is the cause of the present sharp drop in farm prices and income. He declared that workers engaged in processing and canning foodstuffs should be classified as industrial workers and should be protected by the law.

To Senator Murray, Mr. Barden replied with a defense of his amendments. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have different labor standards from the United States—they require different wage and hour scales. He claimed that the act penalizes business men too heavily, making them pay back wages to workers whom they have underpaid in the past. Mr. Barden would limit restitution to six months from the day of the order issued against employers. He would exempt white collar workers who earn $1,800 a year or more, stop them from punching time clocks so that "they can enjoy a bit of golf or baseball or fishing" on the boss's time. He would abolish the "area of production" clause of the act, so that food processing plants and canneries would be exempt as well as lumber, pecan, tobacco, dairy plants, and livestock packing houses. He pitied the poor rural housewife who can no longer make tufted quilts for $2 to $3 a week in her spare time. She should be exempted, he said. He was stodgily statistical, irked by questions, clumsy. He was, as it happened, mainly interested in exempting tobacco stemmers and strippers. The American Tobacco Co., a Duke interest, dominates that part of North Carolina from which Mr. Barden comes. The Swift Packing Co. has a huge plant in Omaha, Neb., the bailiwick of Republican Rep. Harry B. Coffee, who came to Mr. Barden's aid with figures about the terrible situation in which the great meat monopolies find themselves because they must now pay 30 cents an hour after a fourteen-week period of "seasonal" exemption. Handsome Joe Byrns of Tennessee, heavy-browed and Clark-Gableish, quondam liberal, punched ineffectually at the opposition offered by Miss Roche.

For Miss Roche was effective in her simple presentation of the simplest facts about the Wages and Hour law. She exposed the positions of Messrs. Barden and Coffee. She said the problem was one of stopping that mild form of starvation which, according to the surgeon general of the United States, affects 40 percent of our citizens. She decried the shameful conditions which permit food handlers and food growers to starve in the midst of foodstuffs. She attacked the cowardice of the enemies of the act, who were striking out, she said, at the poorest, weakest, and least organized Americans. Over the air her clear voice went out to the millions listening.

### JUST PALS

Then, suddenly, it was over. And a curious change came over the actors. The mikes were dead. The millions could no longer listen. "Well, I put in that starvation stuff," said Miss Roche gleefully. Murray and Byrns were buzzing together. "You cut me short," Byrns complained. In the anteroom they were all pals—although in fairness to Miss Roche it must be said that, lacking congressional immunity, she went her way without further reconciliation with her "enemies." The fourth congressman present, Luther Patrick of Birmingham, Ala., who opposes the amendments, had said little during the debate. He fussed with his notes and in a slow drawl told me: "We're going to win. That's why they were so irritated."

"Irritated" is a small word when you approach the question of New Deal legislation and what is happening to it in Washington today. The Wages and Hour law is one tine of the three-pronged fork of labor laws, of which the National Labor Relations Act and the Social Security laws are the other two. I went to headquarters of the Wages and Hour Division in the Department of Labor building the following morning. There I listened to Bernard R. Mullady, acting assistant administrator, as he told me of the problems which his division faces and has faced. Earlier I had discussed the question with a former official of the administration of Elmer F. Andrews, who was originally in charge of the Wage-Hour Act. I read the first annual report submitted by the present nominal administrator, Harold D. Jacobs.

### SOME CONCLUSIONS

Certain conclusions may be drawn. But conclusions are weak reeds in a storm of facts. The fact is that the Wages and Hour law has scarcely entered upon a period of enforcement. Months were wasted in administrative organization and establishment of procedure. Charges of inefficiency and favoritism brought about the retirement of Mr. Andrews and his replacement by the "non-political" Col. Philip B. Fleming, "unofficial adviser" but actual boss of the Wage-Hour administration. Today the workers are in the hands of Colonel Fleming, for better or worse.

Let us presume that Colonel Fleming will administer the law with zeal, that he will strike out at large corporations without fear. It is a fact that of approximately 32,000 complaints received since Oct. 24, 1938, when the act went into operation, only 1,843 cases had been acted upon by Feb. 15, 1940. The 1940 appropriation amounted to $2,339,000 for personnel. It was supplemented by a $915,000 deficiency appropriation. Colonel Fleming asked for $7,700,000 for seven hundred inspectors in 1941. He will probably get about 350 inspectors and an appropriation of about $4,000,000.

Until recently, but fifty inspectors were

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

available for investigation not only of complaints but of all of the tens of thousands of industrial plants in the United States, which should be visited and inspected. But even if Colonel Fleming's request were granted by Congress and the President the law now on the statute books exempts millions of workers on the farms, in offices, on communication lines, in fishing fleets, as well as in food processing plants, etc. The Barden amendments would literally destroy all but one feature of the act—the "industry committees." Of these later. Let us examine Mr. Barden's knavery first. He would eliminate all handlers of food, from the garden plot to the point of shipment to market. He would to all purposes eliminate all white collar workers except those organized in industrial unions within basic industries. He defends the piecework and homework system. But all of these destructive ideas are merely a cover for his major objective—to limit restitution of back pay to a period of six months. Note the above figures. In eighteen months 1,843 cases have been acted upon. Of these only 1,117 cases have been settled in favor of the workers. Approximately one case in thirty-three has been settled in eighteen months. Virtually none have been acted upon within six months after the date of filing. In other words, basing one's deduction upon Colonel Fleming's frank statement that lack of funds makes enforcement impossible save in the most urgent and flagrant cases—the Barden six-months clause would obviously kill the act.

Why are the lobbyists so anxious to bring the amendments to an immediate vote? Mr. Mullady explained to me that several important administrative orders affecting the canning and livestock industries are to be issued in May. Organizations such as the Southern States Industrial Council and the Associated Farmers are driving for quick action. The Roosevelt leadership in the house has capitulated. Mr. Roosevelt himself had earlier paved the way with his demand for a budgetary appropriation of $4,830,000—a crippling budget, as one official put it.

"INDUSTRY COMMITTEES"

The tories have not bothered to offer amendments to the "industry committee" clauses of the law. This provision sets up boards of arbitration in industries which agree to fix a wage ceiling and an hours floor. Representatives of employers' associations and trade unions meet, together with old man Pro Bono Publico. The representatives of "the public" are often of dubious character and labor is thus in a minority. The committees agree upon a majority decision as to scale, which is then embodied in an administrative ruling. Messrs. Dubinsky and Hochman, union leaders, have cooperated in fixing scales for the garment and men's clothing industries. Other agreements have been made or are being drawn up for the textiles, wool, hosiery, hat, millinery, shoes, knitted underwear and outwear industries, and for railway workers. These committees will have jurisdiction over three million workers; they are industrywide, thus avoiding craft complications. Authority of committees is limited to the ultimate 40 cents per hour, forty-hour week scales which will, if not changed by amendment, become universally effective on Oct. 24, 1945. In this manner a scale higher than the present national scale of 30 cents per hour, forty-two hour week, has been exceeded by certain agreements.

Aime

However, these industry committees represent a long step toward government supervision of trade unions and government mediation of wage and hour disputes. They are derived from the experiences of the NRA and resemble in certain points the British wage-board system. Because of the forty-forty limitations and because of the principle involved in mediation at the hands of "the public," the industry committees contain a germ of danger to workers. Certainly the forty-forty limits imposed by law will defeat attempts to negotiate better terms during a period of war, inflation, or crisis. As a result large employers have gladly seized the opportunity to negotiate. Fixing of scales results in a squeeze against smaller employers of sweated labor. It also gives all employers a legalized method of avoiding direct attack by the unions when a change in scale is demanded because of a depreciation in real wages.

STILL TIME

Like the Walter-Logan bill to restrict governmental agencies and the Smith-Norton amendments to the NLRA, the Barden amendments represent an immediate threat to the gains won at such cost during the period of Roosevelt liberalism. Although powerful forces, including administration leaders, are back of these proposals, there is still time to prevent this sabotage. It is important to understand that a special technique is being used all along the line. Ultra-reactionaries, like Barden, offer drastic amendments. Administration spokesmen apparently fight these proposals, actually work toward the same goal. Administration methods are subtle. Low budgetary appropriations, compromise amendments, middle-of-the-roadism, obstruction, trickery, devices which are not easy to detect—these are the means by which the administration is destroying its handiwork of the lush days when Roosevelt was, according to his friendly enemies, a "Red."

Unlike the dramatic conflict over amendments to NLRA, the struggle against the Barden amendments has not been as articulate and well organized as it should be. This is due to the fact that the Barden amendments do not seem to strike out at the organized workers in the factories, but seem to attack instead those who lack union protection. However, because of the six-months clause, all workers are affected. The law, if it embodies that clause, will be reduced to a mere recording of complaints, a few prosecutions, a few settlements by small employers. The big offenders will go scot free.

"These millions are hungry," snapped Miss Roche that evening, as Congressman Coffee tried to cut her short. "They need food. That's all there is to it. . . ."

But "these millions"—approximately 14,500,000 who come under the scope of the Wages and Hour law—still hold the fort. They still have time to bolster their defenses against the coupon clippers and the lobbyists, the cardboard congressmen and the petty publicists, who are trying to steal the food from their dinner plates, the milk and meat and vegetables from their children's mouths. One-third of America can defeat the handful of willful, callous men who were represented at the radio debate by that tiny group of which the Dukes' Mr. Barden is the chief.

JAMES MORISON.

## Rights of Small Nations

READERS of the editorial, "A Policy for the American People," in the last issue of NEW MASSES will recall our interpretation of the President's decree freezing Danish and Norwegian credits as "cunningly . . . designed to secure Wall Street's trade and investment in the war-bound territory." The day after that editorial was written, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau announced that he was "trustee" for the Danish and Norwegian funds. The *Wall Street Journal* for April 16 had the following item tucked away in its back pages:

Interest due Monday on Denmark's external loan 4½'s, due April 15, 1962, was paid, the Guaranty Trust Co. reports. The bank obtained a license to make the payment. The license was necessitated by the decree under which President Roosevelt tied up Danish funds in this country following the German invasion of Denmark.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The State of the Nation

THIS DEPARTMENT, which NEW MASSES presents weekly, is the joint work of a group of correspondents who send us a letter each week telling about the state of their part of the nation. As more correspondents write in, our coverage will increase. We invite our readers to send their contributions of significant happenings, anecdotes, etc., to "The State of the Nation," NEW MASSES.

## *Book-burning in Ohio*

BRADNER, O.—A dozen old books on civics and science, containing "subversive statements," were burned in the schoolyard here after someone discovered their presence in the high school library. Rev. William Wiegman, school board president, protested the burning; a charge of dynamite was exploded and a fiery cross burned before his home. The terrorists have also started a campaign to force the resignations of both Reverend Wiegman and C. L. Messmore, school superintendent.

## *The State Pays the Rent*

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—The state legislature and the governor of California have been held responsible for paying the rent of a person on relief by a jury in Los Angeles. The ruling is the first of its kind ever handed down. This is how it came about: Client Frank Mshabeck got behind on his rent because he spent his short budget on food and clothes; nothing was left out of his pittance, which was cut 40 percent under the Phillips famine bill passed at the last session of the legislature. So the landlord hauled Mshabeck into court. Attorney for Mshaback was the International Labor Defense. It pointed out that the landlord knew Mshabeck was dependent upon the State Relief Administration and therefore Mshabeck was not responsible for the non-payment of rent because of relief cuts. The jury agreed with the ILD.

## *Anti-injunction League*

CHICAGO, ILL.—Aroused by a flood of new anti-labor injunctions, leaders of progressive, labor, and civic organizations in Chicago are forming an Illinois Anti-injunction League. Assisted by officials of New Jersey's famed Labor's Anti-injunction League, Illinois lawyers, labor leaders (CIO, AFL, and independent), and liberals are seeking an Illinois Norris-LaGuardia act.

Most recent of the anti-labor injunctions granted is one issued by Judge Philip Finnegan. The writ enjoins the CIO nationally, one of its affiliates, the United Furniture Workers of America, and individual members, from picketing the stores of Goldblatt Bros., Inc., where furniture repairmen have been on strike for more than a month. The injunction does more than limit the number of pickets or the type of strike activity: it forbids *any* strike activity, including even nominal picketing. Applied in this case against an industrial union with a minority membership of craftsmen in a department store, the same legal precedent could be used against any individual AFL craft union on strike against an employer of other craft or industrial union members.

## *Just Target Practice*

NEW HAVEN, CONN.—A federal jury in Texas has cleared the Remington Arms Co., of Bridgeport, of charges of conspiracy in the shipment of munitions to Mexico. The company was accused of having conspired with two Mexican military men to export munitions in violation of the Neutrality Act. Attorneys for Remington, which is a du Pont affiliate, claimed the company had believed that the 17,750 rounds of .32-caliber rifle ammunition and ten thousand .38-caliber pistol bullets shipped were only for use in target practice. This argument evidently satisfied the jury.

## *Lurid Luren Dickinson*

DETROIT, MICH.—Fears that Governor ("Lurid") Dickinson, when he runs for office again, "may unwittingly and innocently be used as a kind of Christian Front" for corrupt political bosses were expressed editorially by the Michigan *Christian Advocate,* official journal of Michigan Methodism. The governor, who boasts a pipe line to Heaven, is a member of the Methodist Church.

The fact that Detroit welfare allowances are at least 15 percent below the "absolute minimum health needs" was officially recognized in a resolution introduced in the Common Council, requiring the Welfare Department to submit monthly reports on allowances. Present food allowances for a family of four are as low as $5.65 a week.

## *Picketing the Democrats*

ST. LOUIS, MO.—"If you won't give us what we want, a new party will," proclaimed one of the posters carried by sharecroppers picketing the Municipal Auditorium, meeting hall of the state Democratic convention here. The six pickets, representing the Missouri Agricultural Workers Council (CIO), marched back and forth before the entrances to the auditorium as delegates to the convention were arriving. Other posters read, "We represent the disinherited of Missouri—sharecroppers, unemployed, WPA workers, tiff miners, poor farmers," and, "We demand $6,000,000 relief deficiency appropriation by the special session of the legislature."

## *No Eavesdropping, Please*

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.—The Board of Supervisors of wealthy Westchester County has taken care that no district attorney will listen in (via dictaphone) at its annual dinner *this* year. At the 1939 banquet the DA's aides got a recording of Supervisor William C. Clark's conversations regarding a county sale of Frey Park in Yonkers that proved very embarrassing to Mr. Clark in court. Recently the board met and decided to rebuke the Westchester Country Club, which had permitted installation of the dictaphone, by shifting the banquet over to Apawimis Club in Rye. "While the dinner has never been heavily attended," reports the Harrison (N. Y.) *Citizen-Observer,* "it has been considered a free-spending affair at the bars with many prominent contractors and salesmen of cement and materials in attendance."

## *Five Hundred Acres*

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO.—Puerto Rico's forty-year-old "five hundred acre" law, limiting corporation landholdings to that amount, has finally been upheld by the US Supreme Court. Passed in 1900, the law had become totally inoperative by 1917. Then it was incorporated by the US Congress into the Organic Act of Puerto Rico, but was not applied until 1938, when it was used in a test case that dragged on for two years and finally ended in the recent Supreme Court decision. About five hundred corporations hold 205,000 of the island's 300,000 sugar acres; independent growers hold an average of seventeen acres apiece. Application of the law will make a lot of sugar acreage available for sale to bona fide Puerto Rican farmers. The important need now is for United States government credits, not yet in sight, to enable the farmers to buy this land, preventing the "dummy sales" by corporations which the law prohibits.

## *On the Maumee River*

TOLEDO, O.—Labor's Non-Partisan League decided to endorse none of the current candidates for the governorship. The Democratic Party "in particular is on trial," said League president John Owens. . . . Mayor John Q. Carey of Toledo is sponsoring a proposal that the city explore plans to acquire municipal ownership of a street traction system. . . . Super patriots were shocked by latest tract of Mrs. Elizabeth (Red Network)) Dilling ominously titled *Wanted, A Presidential Man on Horseback,* which lists, among the hopelessly pink-tainted, Ohio's Sen. Robert A. Taft. Others no longer safe in Mrs. D.'s judgment are Sen. Arthur H. Vandenberg, Tom Dewey, and Alf Landon. . . . Burial of penniless persons has become a problem to Columbus city and county officials. Only one cemetery is willing to sell grave lots for the $15 allowance made by local agencies, and undertakers claim the $15 they get for burials is not enough. Joint city-county operation of morgue and public graveyard has been proposed. . . . Toledo's Republican city auditor Charles H. Austin has ruled that $3,000,000 worth of oil properties can be entered by operating companies as personal rather than realty property, saving them $100,000 per year in taxes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW MASSES
ESTABLISHED 1911

*Editors*
A. B. MAGIL, RUTH MCKENNEY, JOSEPH NORTH.

*Associate Editors*
JAMES DUGAN, BARBARA GILES.

*Business Manager* CARL BRISTEL.
*West Coast Representative* GEORGE WILLNER.

★

## *Anti-lynch Bill Sabotage*

WHAT has happened to the anti-lynching bill? Has it gone the way of the rest of the New Deal program? In 1938 the Roosevelt administration was actively behind the bill. But after passing the House, it was filibustered to death by a small clique of anti-New Deal senators. On January 7 of this year the anti-lynching bill was again passed by the House. But today the administration is no longer backing it. It is quietly doing with the anti-lynching bill what it has done with the whole program of social advance which it once sponsored. In March, after hearings by a subcommittee at which representatives of the Communist Party challenged the conspiracy against the bill, the Senate Judiciary Committee reported the measure out. Since then it has been put on ice. Asked when the anti-lynching bill would be taken up, Senator Barkley, chief administration leader, "avoided the question with a laughing counter-question," the New York *Herald Tribune* reported recently.

It's wonderful to have a sense of humor. Fifteen million black Americans, who suffer lynching, Jim Crowism, denial of the right to vote, the poverty that comes from economic discrimination are unable to see the joke. In growing numbers they are determined to overthrow these evils. The fourth conference of the Southern Negro Youth Congress, held last weekend, and the Third National Negro Congress, which meets in Washington this weekend, accent this determination. Millions of white people stand with them in this fight for elementary civil rights. As Dr. Alain Locke, professor of philosophy at Howard University, told the Negro Youth Congress: "The front line trenches in the war for democracy are in the South." For Negroes as for whites, a third party—not a third term—points the way to winning this war.

## *FDR Throws A Stone*

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S strategy in regard to relief is neat but not subtle. In January, you recall, he recommended a WPA appropriation of $975,000,000 for the fiscal year ending July 1941—an amount plainly inadequate then and more so now with mounting unemployment and demands for relief. So, instead of requesting additional funds, he proposes that Congress give him "discretionary authority" to spend—or not spend—the same amount over a period of eight months (from this July to next March) rather than the full year. This is really wonderful: the President not only offers the proverbial stone instead of bread but he uses it to kill a whole flock of political birds. First, his proposal is designed to dispose of the relief question until the presidential campaign is safely over. Second, the President hopes it will enable him to pose to big business as a friend of economy, to the unemployed as a friend of relief. Third, his emphasis on the possible effect of "events abroad" on business conditions at home is intended to divert the people's attention from his own responsibility in the matter of unemployment. The only points Mr. Roosevelt failed to cover are those that concern the actual situation in regard to unemployment and the WPA. Let us remind him:

1. By July 1, some 600,000 workers will have been dropped from WPA rolls for lack of current funds. FDR has indicated his desire to retain the Woodrum amendment which prevents Congress from making a deficiency appropriation to stop these layoffs.

2. The eight-months appropriation, as Workers Alliance leaders point out, would be far less per month than minimum needs require. Both the Alliance and the CIO have estimated that the situation calls for a $3,000,000,000 appropriation (for the full year), to provide three million jobs at trade union standards. The President's proposed appropriation would, at the most, provide for slightly less than two million.

These facts, and their significance, are well known to labor and the unemployed, as well as to some congressmen. Representative Marcantonio of New York is sponsoring a bill to appropriate the $3,000,000,000 which the Alliance and CIO call for. Senator Pepper of Florida is introducing a resolution to halt current layoffs on WPA. "Every extra dollar spent on WPA is an extra dollar spent for peace," says the Alliance. Here is a slogan for the battle for real relief.

## *The People Confer*

IF Franklin D. Roosevelt had listened in on the second annual session of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, held in Chattanooga last week, he would have heard a pointed reminder that "The South is *still* the nation's No. 1 economic problem." And the conference, unlike FDR, is doing something about it. It is fighting for the right of tenants and sharecroppers to organize, farm tenancy legislation, relief for migratory workers, federal aid to education, old age pensions, housing, health, and other social measures. The thousand delegates demanded full rights for Negroes, release of the five Scottsboro boys still in prison, an end to "anti-trust" persecution of trade unions. Representatives of youth and labor, Negro and white, denounced the administration's war policies.

There was another important conference last week, that on civil rights, which met in Washington, D. C., on the call of the Washington Committee for Democratic Action. If Martin Dies eavesdropped on that one he heard himself described as "the grand imperial potentate of invisible patriotism." The four hundred delegates and visitors considered in particular the growing assaults on organized labor. James B. Carey, CIO national secretary, emphasized a fact especially worth remembering: that freedom derives strength from organized labor with its resultant economic betterment. "A man does not have freedom of religion," he remarked, "if he does not have shoes to go to church with." Confucius could not have said it better.

## *Teachers vs. La Guardia*

THE war is supposed to be thousands of miles away, but a lot of heavy artillery seems to be operating from New York's City Hall. With Mayor LaGuardia giving the orders, the social services are being mowed down. The mayor's new executive budget is cut after the pattern of FDR's federal budget. Education, health, and other services take it on the chin, but not a penny is cut from the interest to the bankers.

Particularly articulate in opposing the new budget have been the teachers. New York's schools are overcrowded, yet six hundred teachers have been dropped from the mayor's budget in addition to six hundred previously eliminated by the Board of Education. (Bertrand Russell's appointment was also given the coup de grace.) Reductions have likewise been proposed in funds for school athletic centers, community centers, and day classes for citizenship and English training. In all, $7,000,000 is being slashed from the education budget. In protest members of Local 5, American Federation of Teachers, organized a twenty-four-hour picketline outside City Hall. At the hearing on the budget their demands were supported by representatives of the American Labor Party (the progressive majority group, which is at the helm in New York County), the League of Women Voters, the CIO, the Communist Party, the American Student Union, various parent-teacher associations, and other groups. Dr. Bella V. Dodd, legislative representative of the Teachers Union, touched the nub of the matter when she said:

The budget presented to the Board of Estimate by Mayor LaGuardia shows a callous disregard for the people's needs. We suspect that the mayor is more interested in capturing the financial support of wealthy groups for the coming elections than he is concerned with the health, welfare, and education of the people of this great city.

This simple truth cannot be covered up by the mayor's snide insinuation about "foreign reasons" for the teachers' protest.

## *Monopolists in Overalls*

THURMAN ARNOLD couldn't stay away from the kill. He sat in Judge Bondy's court the day sentence was declared on Ben Gold and his ten colleagues of the Furriers' Union. Most of them got the maximum penalty, one year in jail and up to $2,500 fine.

Something, however, went wrong that great day. Arnold's assistant prosecutor Henderson got his signals mixed: "Mr. Gold and the other defendants," he said, "are well known

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Communists. They are a distinctly un-American element that should have no place in the American labor movement." Cagy Mr. Arnold shook his head; "He shouldn't have said that," newspapermen quoted him in the afternoon editions. But the press carried the remark across the country for all progressives. They understood its significance.

The government, hungering for the kill, ignored all manner of fact established by the defense. Mr. Henderson appealed to the jury to "free" the furriers of Ben Gold's influence. Yet, as defense counsel pointed out, the workingmen, year after year, elected him in free, open, democratic balloting. Mr. Henderson tried to put Mr. Gold and his colleagues on a par with Lepke and Gurrah. Yet testimony proved that the furriers' leaders' courageous insistence put the labor racketeers in jail. The government made much of Mr. Gold's arrest in Wilmington, Del., during a hunger march back in 1932. Yet, as the fur leader declared, he had marched and gone to jail to win unemployment insurance for America, which today, "is a law of this land."

The sole basis of the conviction was the charge that the union carried on a "secondary boycott" against work on skins dyed in a New Jersey firm in March 1933, i.e., "conspirators against interstate trade." The ink had hardly dried on the official papers when Mr. Arnold got after the teamsters: Local 807 is now on trial at the Federal Court House, and many of the teamsters (i.e., "conspirators against interstate trade") appear at the sessions in working clothes. Mr. Arnold contends he is out to stop all violations of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Can the author of the "Folklore" explain why all his victims are those monopolists who come to court in overalls?

## *The Boas Award*

THE American Federation of Teachers has honored itself in bestowing its annual award on Prof. Franz Boas for "outstanding services in the cause of education for democracy." The achievements of Dr. Boas in his own field have placed him in the front rank of the world's anthropologists. Inevitably the search for scientific truth compelled him to take up the cudgels against the purveyors of pseudo-scientific falsehood. In *The Mind of Primitive Man* and other works he marshaled the evidence to refute the racists and obscurantists. These classics of anthropology constitute the best antidote to the neo-Nazi doctrines being propagated by such men as Dr. Alexis Carrel and Prof. Earnest Hooton of Harvard.

But Dr. Boas has been more than scientist and educator in the narrow sense of those terms. As chairman and moving spirit of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom he has given notable leadership to the fight for civil liberties at a time when they are most seriously menaced. He has opposed all efforts to incite war hysteria. He has stood firm in defense of the Bill of Rights. At a time when so many liberals have run for cover in the arms of reaction, Dr. Boas has given a demonstration of true liberalism, of service, not lip service, to democracy.

## *Latin-American Signposts*

WHILE President Roosevelt's "spread eagle" remarks to the Pan American Union on April 15 still echoed throughout Latin America, at least three developments are worthy of note. After negotiating a new trade agreement for expansion of oil exports to Japan, the Mexican government is replying to the recent State Department note on the oil controversy, rejecting the legal basis of the American note and maintaining the traditional Mexican position. At the same time, it is expected that a direct settlement with the Sinclair oil interests may have been reached even before Mexico's note has been made public. Judging from the temper of Mexico's popular demonstrations against American imperialism on April 11, there will be no room for kowtowing to the State Department on the issue of Mexico's integrity. From Chile comes the news that in a senatorial by-election in Santiago, the Popular Front candidate, Maximo Venegas, scored an important electoral victory over the reactionary candidate, Eduardo Cruz Coke. Chile's Popular Front has been subjected to considerable reactionary pressure. The government's program has been hesitant; especially in the cities it has been subjected to severe criticism. In the Socialist Party, a constituent of the Popular Front, a general split has developed. Dissident elements allied with the Trotskyites, oppose continued support to the people's government. The by-election serves both as a rebuke to the reactionary Socialists and as a warning that the Pedro Aguirre Cerda regime must not falter in its reform program if popular support shall be maintained. From Argentine comes the news that the Conservative bloc, allied to British interests, has been upset in the elections for the legislature. The Radicals, supported by the Socialists, have reversed the ten year Conservative trend. British influence seems to be losing its fight for control against the Americans. Argentine rejected the British "free sterling" policy even before the United States; the perspective is toward close cooperation with Washington.

## *Gravy for the Navy*

WHILE the fleet conducts its war games out beyond Hawaii, Admiral Stark carries out a lightning raid on the American Treasury: the most daring naval escapade in years. The Senate has just passed the bloated 1940-41 naval appropriation to the tune of some $963,797,468. Last week the Senate voted $114,000,000 for a third set of Panama locks. Now it is proposed that Congress authorize a five year expansion of the navy which will cost $3,486,000,000 to build and a third of a billion a year to maintain. With complete cynicism the admirals have conveniently discovered a mysterious Japanese naval threat; they are working the gag for all it's worth. Rear Admiral J. K. Taussig, testifying before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee, even insists that war with Japan is inevitable—a completely jingoistic and totally unacceptable assumption. Even granting that Japan is building its navy to a 3.7:5 ratio instead of the traditional 3:5. The fact is that it is the United States which is supplying Japan with the scrap iron and ores that go to make up battleships; it certainly doesn't help to start outracing Japan. There is a further irony involved. On the one hand, government apologists insist that the British Navy is the last line of

## *At Bullet Speed*

Think fast, think deep, America. This was the call NEW MASSES issued last week. America's peace is in danger. Think fast, think deep—and act.

Fellow Americans: what are you doing to save America's peace? *What have you done this past week?*

Time moves at bullet speed. War marches on. It marches against our lives, our liberties, our future. The stock market's "war brides" lead the procession. The du Ponts have just announced that their net profits for the first quarter of 1940 were the largest for any three-month period on record with the exception of the final quarter of 1939. It is the honeymoon of death.

The drums of war propaganda are beating louder than ever since the spread of hostilities to Scandinavia. The Roosevelt administration sets the pace; from Westbrook Pegler to Freda Kirchwey the typewriter generals are sounding the call to arms. But the American people want peace—overwhelmingly. Their deepest desire is to stay out of Europe's embattled hell. This is the most striking, most hopeful fact of our day. A new *Fortune* survey shows that 88.6 percent of the people favor keeping out of war, unless we are attacked, no matter what happens abroad.

Already the hosts of the Yanks who are not coming are rising up in all parts of the country. In Wisconsin a farmers' meeting has raised the cry: "Starve the war—feed America!" On April 19 hundreds of thousands of college and high school students demonstrated against the warmakers. May Day will see millions in every country marching for peace. For us in America it is in truth May Day versus M-Day.

Let us multiply this work. Let peace councils and Yanks Are Not Coming committees be formed in every neighborhood. Enlist your friends and organizations. Talk and act. NEW MASSES opens its pages to your ideas and discussion. Let it be your forum in the fight for peace. This fight can be won. What are you doing to win it?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

defense for civilization; on the other hand, they plan to outbuild the British Navy itself. The whole thing is sheer robbery: it means heavy contracts for a selected line of big business; further reductions in social legislation will be asked to pay for it, perhaps, new taxes for the working and middle classes. It is an omen of war, a war policy of which the administration's big-navy madness is only one aspect.

## *Balkan Patchwork*

"ITALY must work and arm" was Mussolini's reply to the British taunt that he come off the fence and show his hand. It certainly was not a clear statement of policy; there must be plenty of smoke where there's so much fire, but the smoke seems wholly in Il Duce's eyes. It is from France that the most interesting news about Italy comes. That is Paul Reynaud's offer of a Mediterranean pact to Italy and Spain. This is what the Laval-Flandin group in France has been plugging for; perhaps on the basis of reconciling Italy, the Reynaud Cabinet received its large vote of confidence last week. All the old illusions are apparently still operative in France. Just what Britain had to say about Reynaud's offer remains to be seen; how a rapprochement with the Italian fascists will be justified in the "ideological" war against fascism also remains mysterious. In the Balkans proper, Rumania has just concluded a new trade agreement with Germany and its protectorate in Poland. Shipments of oil remain at 130,000 tons per month, if the Germans can carry it away. They will also get cereals and grains, but no better exchange rate with the Rumanian *lei;* goods will be paid for in arms. King Carol released the last of the Iron Guardists, which seems to be a concession to the Germans in the fast dealing that goes on in southeastern Europe. From Yugoslavia, a trade mission has set out for Moscow, backed by overwhelming popular opinion, which has been strongly pro-Soviet. The former premier, Milan Stoyadinovich, was arrested together with members of his strongly pro-Nazi group. Tass, the official Soviet news agency, took some pains to deny that the USSR would use the negotiations "for the purpose of strengthening the position of Yugoslavia with regard to her neighbors." The strategic jockeying in the Balkans goes on. The next move is up to the Allies; everyone else seems to prefer the status quo.

## *East Indian Maze*

UNTIL Cordell Hull's warning to Japan against the unsettling of the status quo in the Dutch East Indies, very few Americans knew much about them. Yet sixty million people live in those eight or nine islands, Dutch and British owned. Their most important wealth consists of rubber, tin, petroleum, quinine, and spices. They have been for years the major source of Dutch imperialist revenue; they form the British gateway between India and the Far East as well as between India and the dominions of Australia and New Zealand. For some decades Japan has persisted in her commercial penetration of these islands in the face of discrimination by imperialist rivals. In the past decade American capital has itself penetrated them extensively; the Philippines are really a northern unit of the East Indies chain.

Mr. Hull's note on April 17 came in reply to a statement by the Japanese foreign minister Arita two days before, which had emphasized the historic Japanese interest in these islands, intimating that if Holland became involved in war, Japan would assert "protection" over them. Most authorities doubt Japan's ability to hold her lines against native and Dutch defenses, even if Australia did not help. On the other hand, Japanese imperialism does covet these islands; the occupation of Hainan, off Indo-China, in May 1938 and seizure of the Spratly Islands were definite Japanese moves into the South Pacific. However, American naval bases in the Philippine Islands stand in the way; American imperialism desires to improve its own position at the expense of Dutch, British, and Japanese rivals. All of this takes place seven thousand miles from our Pacific coast. While Washington bellows about the mythical German threat to the western hemisphere, it pursues an active penetration into the Asiatic hemisphere. Our own suspicion is that the sharpness of Hull's note conceals undercover negotiations for a deal with Tokyo. The British have virtually done this already: their Ambassador Craigie's recent statement on the identity of British and Japanese aims in Asia was specifically supported in Parliament as in no way departing from traditional policy. That is, of course, quite true; Britain always employs Japan's friendship when she gets herself involved in Europe. American policy has traditionally run in the contrary direction. But perhaps the United States, also expecting involvement elsewhere, wants Japan to keep the peace in the Pacific and is willing to pay a price. None of this conforms to the feeling of the American people. It cannot possibly bring democratic China any good.

## *Sic Transit Ingloria*

THE men who ruled Denmark and Norway were the Scandinavian counterparts of Matthew Woll, David Dubinsky, Alex Rose, Louis Waldman, with left and right variations.

While they boasted much of their political independence, their foreign policy was distinguished by its servility to both German and British policy, its hostility to the Communists and the Soviet Union. In 1935 they defamed the USSR for declining to undertake unilateral sanctions against Italy while they themselves supplied the iron ore essential to Hitler's rearmament. They prated much of anti-fascism, but in the days when Litvinov tried to make collective security work, the diplomats of these nations nullified Article XVI of the League of Nations covenant. They defamed the Communists for "splitting" the working class, but they denied effective help to republican Spain. Their votes barred the Soviet trade unions from the International Trade Union Federation last summer. These were the "Socialists" that harbored Leon Trotsky and raised a terrific noise when the Soviet Union took stern measures against spies, Trotskyites, and Bukharinists in the famous Moscow trials. Yet, as Leland Stowe's sensational story on April 15 in the Chicago *Daily News* and New York *Post* revealed, the Narvik garrison and the Oslofjord defenses were betrayed by saboteurs in high places. These were saboteurs whom the Social Democrats condoned at the same time that Communists were outlawed, their newspapers suppressed, and as in Sweden, their leaders prosecuted on the grounds of "treason to the nation."

Theirs was the famous "middle way," and when their mentors, Chamberlain and Hitler, fell out, these politicians caught their peoples in the middle. On the Finnish issue they led the big parade, and after the Finnish peace, when both Britain and Germany plotted to force these nations into warfare, the foreign offices of these nations speculated upon alliances directed against the Soviet Union. Social Democracy's worst betrayal came at the outbreak of the first world war. So again the vestiges of the Social Democrats betray their own peoples in the face of mortal danger. These are the men who presumed to teach Lenin what Marx really meant. These were the valiant retainers of the monarchy from whom Stalin and Molotov were asked to learn how socialism should be built.

## *Labor Roundup*

AS WE go to press the headlines announce that the Supreme Court has killed the anti-picketing laws in California and Alabama. This tops a crucial ten-day period in the affairs of American labor. John L. Lewis bade his followers to rally for a showdown battle on social and labor legislation as Congress prepared to debate the gains made by unionism in the past several years. Issues of major concern to every workingman were involved in the wage-hour amendments, the Wagner act amendments, the relief question, all scheduled for debate in Congress.

Meanwhile all progressives rejoiced in the thumping victory won by labor in the General Motors elections. The CIO won exclusive bargaining rights for workers in forty-nine GM plants. At the same time, the nation's attention was focused on Henry Ford. A National Labor Relations Board examiner accused the auto magnate of carrying out a program of "brutal beatings, whippings, and other manifestations of physical violence" to halt unionism in his Dallas plant. The latter events provided a lowdown on reaction's program: it was obvious that the decision of the House Rules Committee to open the floor for all amendments this week was aimed to prevent further gains by labor, to stop further exposes such as the Dallas incident afforded. Much lies in the balance and every progressive must add his strength for his side.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Readers' Forum

## Spanish Aid Committee

To New Masses:—I know your readers diligently follow the fate of the Spanish refugees in order to give them all possible support. Therefore, I would like to notify them that the recently formed North American Spanish Aid Committee has set up national headquarters at 55 West 42nd St., New York. We have already received expressions of support from many labor, youth, and Spanish organizations throughout the country, as well as heart-warming endorsements from Mexico, Canada, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. The new organization has the support of the majority of chapters of the old organization.

The new group was created at a National Emergency Conference to Save Spanish Refugees on Sunday, April 14, by the unanimous vote of 153 delegates representing eighty-one national organizations. Incidentally, your readers will be concerned with the message received from Constancia de la Mora, noted author of *In Place of Splendor,* now in Mexico. She wrote "the refugees now are in greater need than ever." She also stressed the importance of protesting against the "continued and increased Franco reprisals." I am certain your readers, with these facts at hand, will act accordingly, as they have in the past.

Dr. Edward K. Barsky.
New York City. *National Chairman.*

## "Headlies"

To New Masses:—A friend of mine (let us think of him as Henry) has invented a new word. Henry's a droll but lazy fellow, so I hasten to pass this new word on to readers of New Masses.

"Headlies" is my friend's word. I would say that it characterizes newspaper headlines that are misleading. But Henry—blunt fellow—prefers to use it as describing headlines "that lie." Henry has made quite an amusing game out of picking out headlies. For instance, he called my attention to the triple-deck eight-column streamer in the New York *Times* for Thursday, April 11, two days after the Scandinavian front was opened. The front page of the *Times* that day read:

> NAZIS DRIVEN FROM BERGEN, TRONDHEIM; ALLIES BATTLE ENEMY SHIPS IN SKAGERRAK, FORCE WAY TO OSLO, ORDER GERMANS OUT

That was a headlie, Henry explains, because (1) The Allies did not that day drive the Germans out of Bergen or Trondheim. In fact, they were still *only reported* battling the Germans at Trondheim a week later; and (2) The British did not force their way to Oslo to order the Germans out because as late as April 20 they were still far from Oslo. Then Henry called attention to the New York *Post* —which for some reason he insists on calling the English edition of the *Jewish Daily Forward.* A few days after the *Times* headlie referred to above, the *Post* carried a seven- or eight-inch story with a Paris dateline that was headlied: "Paris sees Soviet move." Henry says this was a headlie because down only about the middle of the story there was a reference to the effect that "Paris thought" the Soviets might move, in view of the Scandinavian situation. That sole reference to the Soviets in a story about eight inches long was what this *Post* headline was based on. The dispatch itself was a typical dope story, full of references like "Observers here think," "The feeling here is," and "Paris thinks."

My friend Henry has made headlies an amusing and instructive game. He thinks that it should be played often if only to make people appreciate the value of New Masses.

New York City. Hy Kravif.

## May Day Greetings

To New Masses:—May Day this year will be marked, however quietly, in many of the jails and penitentiaries of the country by labor's prisoners, among them: J. B. McNamara, who on April 12 spent in Folsom Prison the twenty-ninth anniversary of his arrest on the framed dynamiting charge which has kept him in California prisons since that time; Christopher Clarich, president of the Shrimp Peelers Union of UCAPAWA, serving twenty years for the murder of a vigilante killed when a band of vigilantes attacked a picketline in Aransas Pass, Tex.; John Williams, twenty-three-year-old Negro worker, sentenced to seven to fifteen years in Sing Sing, framed on a flimsy rape charge in a Brooklyn community where he had lived and worked for years; the five Scottsboro boys still jailed in Alabama which freed four of the boys on the same charges on which the five, Andy Wright, Charlie Weems, Ozie Powell, Heywood Patterson, and Clarence Norris are held.

These and many other labor prisoners will be remembered on May Day by thousands of individuals and organizations whose names will be on a giant greeting card sent to them by the International Labor Defense. Individuals who contribute 25 cents or more, and organizations contributing $2 or more to the May Day Fund of the ILD are entitled to have their names printed on the giant greetings. Funds collected will be devoted to aiding labor prisoners and their families with relief.

I am sure many of your readers will wish to join in this greeting and aid these heroes of labor's cause. Their contributions should be sent to Robert Dunn, treasurer, ILD, 112 East 19th St., New York City.

New York City. Anna Damon.

## YCL to the Rescue

To New Masses:—Here's a tale of the bloody deeds of the Young Communist League whose members are being constantly hounded by Martin Dies.

Recently, Max Glantzman of the Ann Arbor YCL heard that a graduate student friend of his, who is not a Communist, was in the University Hospital, bleeding continually from a stomach ulcer. All the doctors could do was keep him alive by running more blood into him, but the supply of available blood, or "blood bank" as it is called, was running short.

The YCL met that night and Max presented to the group the situation of his friend and asked for volunteers as free blood donors.

The next day the hospital was swamped with YCLers. To date they've replaced more than 4,000 cc of blood and are still going strong piling up a blood reserve, as the friend is going to need a lot more in a few weeks when he is operated on.

There is no other campus group that would have done what these "dirty young Reds" did, namely: without bravado, without publicity—just quietly they gave their blood.

Ann Arbor, Mich. Joseph P. Andriola.


**RECORDS FOR MAY 1st.**

*Have You Seen Our Complete Stock of*

- WORKERS SONGS
- TAC RECORDINGS

*And Other Records of Social Significance*

SEND FOR LISTS NM

**O. PAGANI & BRO.**

289 BLEECKER ST. NEW YORK, N. Y.

**A. B. MAGIL**

**New Masses editor is available for lecture engagements. Mr. Magil is the co-author with Henry Stevens of the book "The Peril of Fascism" published in 1938. He is also the author of two pamphlets about Father Coughlin, "The Truth About Father Coughlin" and "The Real Father Coughlin." He has been a leading figure in the labor and progressive movement in America as an editor, writer and teacher for many years. He speaks on national and international questions. Also available are other speakers, including the following New Masses contributors: Joseph North, Carl A. Bristol, Joseph Starobin, H. C. Adamson.**

**NEW MASSES LECTURE BUREAU**
**461 Fourth Ave. New York City**
***CA 5-3076***

**NEW MASSES ★ BILL OF RIGHTS FUND DRIVE**

NEW MASSES, 461 FOURTH AVE., N. Y. C.
Enclosed is my contribution towards the New Masses "Bill of Rights" drive fund.

Name . . . . . .
Address . . . . . .
City and State . . . . . .
Amount Enclosed $ . . . . . .
4-30-40

*Please mention* New Masses *when patronizing advertisers*


PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Meaning of Bigger Thomas

## Samuel Sillen discusses the most-discussed character of 1940's literature. Article II of the series on Richard Wright's novel.

IT IS my impression that most reviews of *Native Son,* whether favorable or hostile, suffer from two closely related faults. The first is a tendency to consider events and character apart from their context and development. The second is a failure to analyze the organic relation between the esthetic and social effects of the book. These faults reflect two essential characteristics of undialectical thinking: atomism, or the chopping up of reality into disjointed bits; and dualism, or the application of a double standard of life and literature.

Criticism must overcome the error of thinking in compartments before it can hope to register sound judgments of artistic work. For the creative process is a dialectical process. It is characterized, in other words, by a sense of organic change and development; it does not differentiate mechanically between content and form; it sets up a reciprocal influence between the parts and the whole; it strives toward the resolution of conflict on progressively higher levels of consciousness. If we are properly to understand and evaluate the product of such a process, we must ourselves think dynamically. This is certainly our first responsibility to a novel like *Native Son.* It is not an impulsive or haphazard creation. To discover its deepest meaning, to appraise its weakness and its strength, we must grasp the novel as a carefully planned accumulation, rather than as a broken sequence, of events, characters, moods, and ideas.

By isolating various aspects of the book from its total meaning, most commentators of both the right and the left have apparently missed the real significance of the central character, Bigger Thomas. At one pole Bigger has been treated as a mean, contemptible, ignorant, and brutish killer; the subterfuge of quotation marks around the expression "bad nigger" has again and again been used to convey this impression. At the opposite pole Bigger has been treated as a poor victim of circumstance, a helpless creature whose human dignity has been stamped out by an oppressive society; according to this view he is to be pitied, not hated. Neither approach, I believe, gets us close enough to the truth.

The first approach is a flat distortion of the novel. The horrible external details of Bigger's actions are maliciously ripped out of their human and social context with a view to creating hostility toward the Negro people. This is precisely the impression that State's Attorney Buckley and the lynch-inciting press seek to create *within the book itself.* Indeed, Wright deliberately portrayed a conflict of interpretation over Bigger's actions as an integral part of his dramatic structure. In this conflict, the class forces of our society are revealed; the esthetic effect of this clash is identical with its political effect. Through the behavior of the prosecution at the coroner's inquest and at the trial, Wright exposes the bigoted, deceitful, and hypocritical impulses of the anti-Negro forces in America. Buckley, the machine politician, has to get Bigger, at whatever cost to decency, in order to ensure his reelection. The press raises the lynch cry of "sex-killer" in order to still the South Side demand for better housing. It is not Bigger who is obscene, vicious, cruel; it is the men who convict him. The intelligent reader must shudder at the thought of any past or future identification between himself and the powers that a Buckley represents.

The approach to Bigger as a creature of circumstance is more sympathetic, but it misses an essential point. I would emphasize most firmly that the analogy to Dreiser has been overdone. For Bigger Thomas is not, like Clyde Griffiths in *An American Tragedy,* a weakling who tends merely to reflect the pressures of his environment. The difference between Wright's dramatic realism and Dreiser's naturalism is connected with a difference in their conception of the role of personality in fiction. In *Native Son* the social pressures meet the resistance of a positive and creative individual. There is a revolutionary potential in Bigger, however frustrated or perverted it may be by the discriminatory order in which he lives. Too much attention has been paid to the unforunate ways in which society has forced him to express himself, and not enough to the dynamic emotional force which drives him toward an assertion of his will to create a different world for himself. It is only partly true to say that capitalism makes him what he is; it is even more important to insist that capitalism *unmakes* what he is, a sensitive, imaginative, and creative personality.

### THE REAL BIGGER

Bigger is a rebel whose every word and gesture is a challenge to those who have attempted to curb and crush his talents. "Why they make us live in one corner of the city?" he cries. "Why don't they let us fly planes and run ships. . . ." His mother and the Reverend Hammond urge him to accept the consolations of religion. His friend Gus advises him not to think so much or he will go mad. His girl Bessie, weary and worn from her work in other people's kitchens, offers to snatch salvation out of forgetfulness in sensual pleasures. But Bigger cannot forget, he refuses to forget that he is being elbowed out of life.

And Bigger is tender and warm beneath his hardboiled exterior. Everybody comments on the opening scene, where Bigger is mean and tough toward his sister Vera and his mother. One should balance that with the jail scene near the end of the book when his family comes to visit him. "How you l-l-like them sewing classes at the Y, Vera?" he asks the sister whom he had once scared to tears. And when he learns that she has had to leave the Y because she is now ashamed before the other girls, he realizes that his family is a part of him in spirit as well as in blood. Three times he tells his mother: "Forget me, Ma," though he knows, with a new and mature insight, that she will never forget. Similarly, Bigger's attitude toward Jan Erlone undergoes a profound change which reveals his unfolding attitude toward other people. At first, Bigger had attempted to implicate Jan in the death of Mary Dalton, knowing that the authorities would jump at the chance to punish a Communist. But after he has been captured, and after the sincerity of Jan's friendship has been proved, Bigger refuses to allow the court to blame his actions on the Communists. "He didn't have nothing to do with it," he says. "There wasn't nobody but me. I don't care what happens to me, but you can't make me say things about other people."

Indeed, the whole meaning of Jan in this story has been widely misinterpreted. Jan has been described by reactionary critics as a horrible example of how Communists treat Negroes; here again such an interpretation is portrayed and refuted in the novel itself through the Red-baiting, anti-Semitic tactics of the press and prosecution. Some Communists, on the other hand, are disturbed by the portrayal of Jan because, as they rightly point out, certain of his actions are not representative of the behavior of Communists and therefore open to reactionary propaganda against Wright's own party, the only party which has fought consistently and courageously on behalf of the Negro people.

It is quite true that Jan's behavior in the opening section of the book is not that of a mature Communist. Indeed, it is Jan himself who later on admits his blunders. His good will toward Bigger Thomas outruns his understanding of Bigger. By overwhelming Bigger with his impetuous kindness, by overreaching himself in his quite sincere demonstration of friendship, Jan manages to increase the bewilderment of the man whom

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he would enlighten. I believe that Wright was driving home the point that mere good will may turn into its opposite unless it is coupled with a rich understanding of human personality. This is not a new conception. It is certainly a Marxist conception. As I have already suggested, Jan himself grows up toward this idea, which he must always have had in theory, as a result of bitter practice. "I was kind of blind," he tells Bigger. And the real stature of Jan's new understanding is revealed in the scene in which he pleads with Bigger to let him help, despite the fact that the girl he loved had been accidentally killed by Bigger, and despite the fact that Bigger has tried to pin the murder on him. Later on, at the coroner's inquest, the prosecution attacks Jan—for shaking hands with Bigger, for eating with him, for urging him to drop the Mister! As a result of such a cross-examination, I for one feel the strength and humanity of Jan. His character, like Bigger's, emerges from the novel as a whole, rather than from one scene. Both men *grow*. And in the end, both men have made a bridge over the great gulf which originally separated them.

There is, however, an element of validity in the criticism of Jan as a character. I think it is this: that the first Jan scene, coming as it does at a moment of high tension, burns itself deeper into the reader's mind than the second, which comes immediately after the tension of the murder and the flight has been snapped. There is a difference in the dramatic impact of the two scenes. The second is unfortunately less fully developed than the one before the death of Mary. Moreover, too long an interval has elapsed between the restaurant and the jail scenes, so that readers tend to have a first impression of Jan which no later explanation will quite succeed in modifying. On the other hand, too many readers have evidently ignored what is actually in the book.

Another aspect of the book that has caused much comment is the trial scene. My own feeling is that Mr. Max's defense speech is weak in two respects. For one thing, it is a lengthy rhetorical restatement of the issues which the novel has already stated in powerful dramatic terms. It is a set speech which makes one feel that Wright, a little uncertain that his meaning has been communicated, interpolated what amounts to a summary draft of the story. Because of his concern with explicit statement, Wright does not take advantage of the scene's potential dramatic values. This artistic weakness is linked with an even more important fault: the absence of clarity in the appeal. Whatever judgment legal experts may pass upon the correctness of the procedure adopted by the defense, the plea itself leans too heavily on an involved psychological approach that gives a confusing picture of the political issues in the case. Mr. Max's overstudied phrases in the courtroom suffer by contrast with his simple and effective talk outside.

The absence of Negro characters who have


*It won the Guggenheim Prize . . .*

*It deserved the Pulitzer Prize!*

. . . IT'S YOURS FREE

# "The Stricklands"

## *by* EDWIN LANHAM

(RETAIL PRICE $2.50)

**THIS is a novel of Oklahoma, a people bruised by adversity, but not beaten; a story of tragedy and triumph; the story of Jay Strickland, whose motto might have been "all men are my brethren."**

**"The Stricklands" is an exciting story of an Oklahoma redhead who was not remotely vicious but who couldn't keep out of trouble and whose troubles pile up until the story reaches a climax in which the cries of the hunters following their prey blend with the tom-toms beating out the measure of an Indian stomp-dance.**

**The book is just that. It is also the story of a family—the Strickland family: Crosby, who made the best corn licker in his part of the state and knew it aged best in a keg fastened to a swaying branch; his sons, Jay, who had dedicated himself to organizing the tenant farmers, and Pat, the redhead; and Pat's wife, Belle, beautiful, a crack shot, devoted to her son, her husband, and her husband's people.**

NEW MASSES, 461 FOURTH AVE., N. Y. C.

Gentlemen: Please send one year of *New Masses* and "The Stricklands" by Edwin Lanham to me. I enclose $4.50.

Name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

City and State . . . . . .

4-30-40

"The Stricklands" is a novel you won't want to miss. It's yours—*free* . . . Merely fill out the coupon below, enclose $4.50 in check or money order for one year's subscription to *New Masses* and "The Stricklands" comes along automatically as a free gift to you. *This is a limited offer.* Tear off the coupon and send it in today.


PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LATEST IMPORTED RUSSIAN
RECORDS!
By Modern Russian Composers
*Song of the Plains*
*Red Moscow*
*Kalinka*
*From Border to Border*
*Cossack's Song*
*Sport March*
*Strolling Home*
*Field, My Field*
*and many others*
Send for Complete List NM
Phone CH 2-6744 Open Evenings
O. PAGANI & BRO.
289 BLEECKER STR – N.Y.
Cor. 7th Ave.

LOngacre 5-8896
MARTY'S
*Your Hairdresser for Beauty Aid*
123 West 45th Street, bet. Broadway & 6th Ave., New York
100% Unionized

# Subscribe for Life

NEW MASSES is now in the midst of a "Bill of Rights" sustaining fund drive for $25,000. We have often indicated in the past that one of the most effective ways to aid this drive is to secure subscriptions. Steady subscribers are, as you know, the only actual and bona-fide angels that this magazine possesses. We don't call them angels; we call them, more accurately, *reader-stockholders.*

To present subscribers of NEW MASSES and to newsstand readers, we are offering a special *Life Subscription* to NEW MASSES for $100.

In the twenty-nine years of its history, as a courageous fighter for freedom and a better day, NEW MASSES has had on its subscription rolls a small host of subscribers who began their subscription way back in 1911 when the *Masses* first started. They've uninterruptedly stuck with us and today they admit frankly that they can't do without us.

May we suggest that you, too, join this inner circle? Make your check payable to either Carl A. Bristel, Treasurer, or Weekly Masses Corporation, 461 Fourth Ave., New York City.

NEW MASSES, 461 FOURTH AVE., N. Y. C.
Please put me down for a life subscription to NEW MASSES. Enclosed is a check for $100.

Name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

City and State . . . . . .

4-30-40

identified themselves with the labor movement has been noted as a defect of the book. It is pointed out that Bigger is projected as a symbol of the Negro people, and that this is unfortunate because such a symbol does not suggest the socially constructive reactions of masses of Negroes to their oppression under capitalism. I believe that we must move cautiously here. It is true, of course, that *Native Son* is not an all-inclusive picture of Negro life. It is equally true that American fiction has so far failed to give an adequate picture of Negro men and women in the trade union and progressive political movements. In this respect, novelists are lagging behind reality. I think that Wright might have given some more explicit indication that there is a quite different side of Negro life from that which he has dealt with here—several indirect suggestions do appear—but I also believe that to have developed this side to the extent which it deserves would have meant the writing of another novel. This is *Bigger's* story. It had to be told; and I rejoice that it has been told so well. If Bigger must be interpreted symbolically, it is only to the extent that he represents the deep urge to live and create which no exploitative society can permanently subdue. Properly directed, the positive aspects of Bigger's nature to which I have referred are loaded with a significance and hope for the future toward which we aspire. On the title page of the novel, Wright has quoted a verse from Job which pointedly expresses the meaning of Bigger Thomas: "Even today is my complaint rebellious, My stroke is heavier than my groaning." It is a meaning that will not easily be forgotten.

THE FLOOR IS OPEN

I hope that readers of NEW MASSES will send in expressions of their reactions to *Native Son.* I am certain that an open and full discussion from various points of view will clarify a number of basic critical problems raised by the book. NEW MASSES is eager to publish such a discussion. By all means, let us hear what *you* think.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

## The Aviation Business

THE AVIATION BUSINESS: FROM KITTY HAWK TO WALL STREET, *by Elsbeth E. Freudenthal. The Vanguard Press. $3.00.*

WITH export figures setting new records and the administration seeking an increase in air forces of army and navy, the aviation industry once more takes the spotlight of current interest. Stock prices reflect the expectation of higher profits. Insiders are preparing once more to reap a golden harvest.

In the development of American aviation scandals have flared up periodically ever since the first costly fiasco of planes that would not fly for the American army in Mexico in 1916. Some of us remember the billion dollars laid out for army planes in the World War, which produced no fighting machines whatever and less than two hundred unsafe observation planes which (literally) went down in history as "flaming coffins." But the details of the scandals, and the record of expansion at public expense between scandals, have been pretty much buried in dusty files of government hearings, special reports, and financial manuals.

Now, at last, these records have been thoroughly combed. From them Elsbeth Freudenthal gives us a critical, well written and well documented story. As factual narrative it is excellent, rich in detail and yet keeping clearly distinct the various elements in the situation. Although the story is held strictly to the aviation industry and no political interpretation is attempted, it throws much light on the capitalists' technique in this period of capitalist decay. For the manufacture of airplanes and the operating of air transport have become an essential part of national defense. So the growth of the industry has been encouraged by the government and the industrialists have utilized to their own profit its strategic importance. Aviation is a small industry in total investment, total value of products, and numbers employed, and yet most of the leading financial interests of the country have clustered about it.

Miss Freudenthal renders an important service by giving detailed and exact information on the financial groups active in the largest companies. She also makes very clear that while these groups compete in manufacturing and air transport within the United States, they are all united in Pan American Airways. This company holds a monopolistic position and is a semi-governmental agency of imperialism. How Pan American has been subsidized by high rates for carrying mail and protected from competition has been officially investigated. But the seamy side of its development has had none of the publicity attending the various stages of the domestic airmail scandals. Is this because it is a semi-governmental agency, as Miss Freudenthal suggests? Or is it because its board of directors assembles the innermost circles of American finance capital?

Two important facts stand out in the story of the aviation business. First, many of those individuals most intimately involved in the scandals of the World War period—and publicly exposed at that time—are still important figures in aviation and banking. And, second, while investigations have led to new regulations and the formal separation of manufacturing and transport, there has been an astonishing continuity of interest and control within the several groups of companies. This is emphasized by the author, who shows frankly and well the rotten symptoms of capitalist corruption.

But questioning of the system itself, or analysis of the reasons for increased international tension and heavier armaments, lie entirely beyond the scope of the book. Miss Freudenthal does urge the necessity for government ownership of airplane manufacture and transportation. She does not suggest the seriousness of such a proposal, involving as it does the wresting from dominant financial interests of one of their richest sources of profit.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As a straightforward narrative, authentic and interesting, the book has its own important function and should be widely read.

ANNA ROCHESTER.

## Alice in Naziland

TWO THOUSAND AND TEN DAYS OF HITLER, *by Patsy Ziemer. Harper & Bros. $2.75.*

PATSY ZIEMER is a twelve-year-old American girl whose father and mother conducted the American School in Berlin from 1928 to 1939. With the growth of Nazi power the American School's existence became increasingly difficult since it operated along latitudinarian lines and its pupils were foreigners and German Jews. The Ziemers closed their school last year, and from their present home in Minnesota, Patsy writes of her life in Germany.

Patsy writes charmingly and astutely with a directness and simplicity older commentators must envy. Here she is describing the first "one-pot" Sunday in Berlin:

> That fall when the party leaders met at Nuremberg Hitler and Goebbels had told the men that Germany must take care of all those who had no food. This is how they did it. . . . On those Sundays they had public eating places in the big open squares. There some of the big bugs from the Wilhelmstrasse came to eat so that everybody could see that they had the same food as the workingman. But perhaps they ate something when they got home. We did. We had a duck.

For Patsy's pictures of what she saw Daddy Ziemer supplies frames of interpretation. Unfortunately, Daddy is as politically naive as his little girl, and while her pictures are clear and pointed, his interpretations are muddled and awry. He doesn't like the Nazis and shows abundantly how they have brought havoc and destruction to the lives of the German people; nevertheless he feels that they are trying their best to do what is right.

Two of Patsy's memorable pictures are her visit to a Nazi public school, and the terror days of November 1938. At the *gleichgeschaltet* school she is astounded by the catechismal teaching and the children's soserious, never-smiling faces. With the terror days she has close association. She was on the Kurfurstendamm when the Nazis began wrecking the Jewish-owned shops. "I think it is a very scary sound when glass breaks. I hate it. I never heard so much glass break as that morning on the Kurfurstendamm." Each day Patsy heard the frightened Jewish children who came to the American School "because they felt safer there than anywhere else," tell of their parents' arrests.

The story of Patsy and her family calls to mind another American family abroad: the Quaker Timbres who went to work in the Soviet Union and published their family journals last year as *We Didn't Ask Utopia.* But the Timbres' story was the discovery of a broad new way of life, while Patsy must tell how life was taken away from a whole people.

CORA MACALBERT.


**18th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION MORNING FREIHEIT**

**SPEAKERS: EARL BROWDER, WILLIAM WEINER, MAX STEINBERG AND PAUL NOVICK**

ARTISTS: VIOLA PHILO of RADIO CITY—MAX HELFMAN and the YIDDISH PHILHARMONIC CHORUS—BENJAMIN ZEMACH and DANCE ENSEMBLE—BENYOMEN FOLKS QUINTET—EUDICE SHAPIRO, Violin Soloist

**DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 11th, 7:30 P.M., at MADISON SQUARE GARDEN**

All Seats Reserved—at Daily Worker Office, Bookstores, I. W. O. Centers PRICES: 40c, 65c, 85c, $1.10

THE CHINA AID COUNCIL presents

*A Night of Nights for* CHINA ★★★

"I am happy to be the head of the China Aid Council in its work of alleviating the suffering of the Chinese people." —MRS. SARA DELANO ROOSEVELT, *Hon. Chairman*

"I am delighted to participate. Night of Nights should receive whole-hearted public support." —HELEN HAYES

STARS OF STAGE, SCREEN, DANCE and ENTERTAINMENT WORLD will appear

CENTER Thea., RADIO CITY 49TH ST. & 6TH AVE. SUNDAY EVE., May 5

Tickets 50c, $1, $1.50, $2, $3 and $5—NO TAX—On sale at LeBlang-Gray's, 1476 B'way, cor. 42nd St.; Center Theatre Box Office May 4th and 5th, and China Aid Council, 200 Fifth Ave., Room 850, ALg. 4-0293. Proceeds Chinese War Orphans and Refugee Rehabilitation.

**JOHN'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT**
302 EAST 12th STREET
Telephone: GRamercy 5-9531
**DINNER 65c**
and up—also a la Carte
Private Dining Rooms for Parties

"You positively must see Davenport's Free Theatre. It will forever flavor your memories of the theatre."—Reader's Digest
**DAVENPORT FREE THEATRE**
138 East 27th Street, N. Y. C.
"A WOMAN'S WAY" 3 act comedy. Tues., Wed. & Thurs., 8:30 P.M.
"THE BELLS" 3 act drama. Fri., Sat. & Sun., 8:30 P.M.
ADMISSION FREE

*Hollywood Forum*
**THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION**
*Brought Up to Date*
Led by NORMAN BYRNE
Professor at City College of Los Angeles
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
Next Forum will be held Wednesday Eve. May 1st, 8:30 p.m. Fine Arts Hall of the Wilshire Ebell Club, Wilshire at Lucerne, Hollywood, Calif.
Auspices: NEW MASSES ADMISSION: 25 CENTS

NEW YORK PEACE ASSOCIATION
*presents*
**CABARET TAC**
"SATURDAY NIGHT IN HARLEM"
**THIS SATURDAY NIGHT, APRIL 27**
PARK PALACE 5th Ave. at 110th St.
Tickets $1.10 and $1.65 at Box Office and 1133 Broadway
*DANCING AFTER PERFORMANCE*

***"DESERVES A WIDE AUDIENCE, FOR ITS APPEAL IS DIRECT AND IT HITS WHERE WE LIVE."***
***—ALVAH BESSIE, NEW MASSES***

CARLY WHARTON and MARTIN GABEL present
**"MEDICINE SHOW"**

In the same manner as "one third of a nation" dramatized the housing problem, so this living-newspaper play socks home across the footlights the dire need for some sort of socialized medicine. The sock caught us squarely on the chin, and we couldn't wait until we got out to wire our Congressman to vote for a national American health plan."—HOLLYWOOD REPORTER.

"More exciting than the headlines from Norway. Here is a war to be waged right at home and it affects everyone." —BRONX NEWS.

"Done with zest, power, remarkable dramatic effectiveness. The most controversial theatrical work in town. Pulsates with life and fury." RICHARD WATTS, JR., *Herald Tribune.*

"Drives home its point invincibly." —ARTHUR POLLOCK, *Brooklyn Eagle.*

"Profoundly impressive, original and vital. Although it is generally a little presumptuous for a drama reviewer to urge readers to see a specific play, the occasion is sufficiently unusual to warrant an except." —BROOKS ATKINSON, *Times.*

"As good as 'one third of a nation' with even a defter touch. Vibrant, daring. Give it your support." —DAILY WORKER.

**A NEW LIVING NEWSPAPER PLAY**

**NEW YORKER THEATRE** 54th St., W. of B'way. Cir. 6-2737
Eves. at 8:50. Mats. Wed. and Sat. at 2:50
ENTIRE ORCH. $1.10 & $1.65 • BALC. & MEZZ. 55¢ to $1.65
At All Performances Except Saturday Nights when scale is 83c to $2.20


PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

S I G H T S A N D S O U N D S

# Take the "Heavenly Express"

## Albert Bein's moving play reviewed by Alvah Bessie . . . Molly Picon in an old-fashioned family drama . . . "Medicine Show": a reminder . . . Artists Congress show.

You will find it well worth the price of admission to see Albert Bein's *Heavenly Express* at the National. It provides a full evening's entertainment on a rather high level, although it cannot be said to be a thoroughly successful play from every angle. The apparent paradox is resolved by the pleasure you will derive from those moods and actions of Mr. Bein's fantasy about hoboes that *do* jell, and by a production that is gratifying any way you look at it.

The fantasy that has engaged Bein's attention and efforts revolves about the legendary aspects of the American tramp. The true 'bo does not work any more than is necessary, according to the American credo; which distinguishes him from the migratory worker, who is intent on making a living for himself and for his family. Although it is doubtful that this is a valid understanding of the disinherited men (and women) who crowd our highways and our railroads, it does not invalidate the legend. In the last century a body of literature has grown up about our "jungles" and our wanderers; they possess a true folk balladry and a literary heritage rich in human values. Several of the songs of the road have been incorporated in this drama of the "travelers," and they are integrated into the main body of a fable that is concerned with the Overland Kid and the Heavenly Express. The Overland Kid describes himself as the "advance ticket-taker" for the ghost train that takes the 'bo to the Big Rock Candy Mountains where "you never change your socks, and little ole streams of alcohol come tricklin' down the rocks." He is the messenger of the Almighty Vagabond, the angel of death to the dying hobo.

The eerie mood of fantasy is a difficult one to sustain, and the author has not been uniformly successful in sustaining it, sometimes even in realizing it. As a result, his fable evaporates occasionally, and the play seems contrived. But there are, happily, many moments when the action will grip you, and a genuine poetry of mood and language makes itself felt. There is imagination and talent at work here, and enough of it to justify the production of this play, which has been begging for a producer for some years. Kermit Bloomgarden is to be commended for his initiative. His production, under Robert Lewis' sensitive direction and dowered with Boris Aronson's imaginative sets and costumes and Lehman Engel's haunting incidental music, is arresting. Lewis overworks some of his stage effects, light and music cues, but generally he continues his tradition of creative stage direction. Some of the Group Theater's most gifted actors are present in the cast, and as usual they play in a finely integrated manner.

It is good to be able to say that John Garfield, originally of the Group, has lost nothing through his long sojourn on the Gold Coast. A performer endowed with a unique and natively brilliant acting intelligence, he plays the Overland Kid to the hilt, and is a constant joy to watch. The boy is terrific. A brilliant comedy performance is offered by Philip Loeb as Rocky Mountain Red; he is one of our most distinguished clowns. Harry Carey's veteran engineer, Russell Collins' distracted train dispatcher, Aline MacMahon's touching Mother-to-all-Bums, and incidental bits by Will Lee, Curt Conway, and James O'Rear are all gratifying and soundly understood performances.

You may feel that Bein has been overly romantic in his treatment of his tramps, who seem uniformly contented and never disinherited for a moment, but there is a definite place in the theater for works such as this, which catch and project a quality of imagination all too rare on the stage these days—a free, fanciful, and unrealistic play of human spirit. Nostalgic fantasy is a difficult medium, and it is only valid when it actually crystallizes basic human feelings. This Albert Bein has not always done, but he has done it often enough in *Heavenly Express* to warrant your attendance at his show.

### "MORNING STAR"

Molly Picon, the veteran Yiddish actress, has made her English-speaking debut in Sylvia Regan's *Morning Star,* at the Longacre. This is a sentimental family drama, which covers twenty-one years in the course of its six scenes, beginning in 1910 with Becky Felderman in an East Side flat with her four growing children, three girls and a boy. By the time the drama has ended, one girl has died in the Triangle fire, the boy has made a Gold Star Mother of Mrs. Felderman, the two other girls have married, and the grand old lady has finally succumbed to the blandishments of her persistent boarder, Aaron Greenspan.

There are moments when Miss Regan is on the verge of saying something important about war and unemployment and the mother's struggle to keep her sprawling family together; and what is said, is said through the indisputable impact of the sentimental approach to life. But the whole is marred by its spineless plot, which is a wonder to behold. For it hops, skips, and jumps from family crisis to emotional jimjams, and it pulls every stop on the domestic harmonium. Hoked to the eyebrows, it moves its audience to tears, sighs, and laughter and a good time is had by all. For there is enough of common humanity in this homely work to provide many scenes of genuine recognition, simple and hackneyed (and sometimes phony) as they may be. On this basis alone, it should be a success.

Watching it you will be reminded of the rich source from which Clifford Odets has drawn some of his best scenes and compelling human motivations—that tragic sense of life and vital humor which is so characteristic of the Jews. Miss Regan, however, stemming from the same milieu, has yet to show an adequate depth of understanding and dramaturgic intelligence.

As the perennial boarder Joseph Buloff turns in a unique comedy performance that will demonstrate to you how much a fine actor can add to slight material; he is a continual delight. Miss Picon has warmth and the assurance that comes with many years of stage performances, but she seems to me a routine stock actress. Jeanne Greene (especially in her big scene), Kenneth LeRoy, Martin Blaine, David Morris, and Sidney Lumet are generally effective as assorted children, grandchildren, and sons-in-law, and Howard Bay's set recalls the color of a day gone by.

### REMINDER

You are respectfully requested not to miss *Medicine Show,* at the New Yorker Theater, where the problems of public health in the United States (as seen by the public, not the AMA) are dramatized in terms of the Living Newspaper. It was to be expected that the American Medical Association, brilliantly attacked in the play, would not like it one little bit. The various publications of Organized Medicine are calling the show "propaganda," which it most certainly is. And very effective propaganda too.

ALVAH BESSIE.

# Exhibition

## American Artists Congress Gives Comprehensive Show

STUART DAVIS, Lewis Mumford, and Meyer Schapiro, among seventeen others, have audibly resigned from the American Artists Congress. Mr. Davis says he has no confidence in the leadership; Mr. Mumford took umbrage at a paper by Lynd Ward, which he had neither read nor heard, but took the critical privilege of denouncing as a totalitarian ukase; and Mr. Schapiro hastily paid $6 back dues for the privilege of quitting.

The Congress need not mourn for the few summer soldiers, who jumped the reservation so quick they have not yet been able to con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# NEW MASSES Classified Ads

50c a line — Min. charge $1.50
7 words in a line — Deadline Fri. 5 p.m.

**Classified ads can not be accepted over the telephone, and must be paid for in advance.**

APARTMENT TO RENT

1 ROOM APARTMENT, 14th Floor—Kitchenette, Elevator, Tel. Service. $27.50. Unfurnished. Call Drapkin, CH 2-9877 bet. 7 & 8 P.M. or GR 3-5146 bet. 12 & 1 P.M.

APARTMENT TO SUBLET

LARGE BRIGHT 1½ ROOM APARTMENT, FURNISHED. ALL MODERN CONVENIENCES. MIDTOWN. CALL LExington 2-5541.

CLEANING AND DYEING

BRACNEL Cleaners, Dyers & Tailors, 43 Greenwich Ave. GOODS CALLED FOR AND DELIVERED. For good work & prompt service call CH 2-7074. G. Brachman, mgr.

DANCE INSTRUCTION

SOCIAL DANCE GROUP. For six years we have been teaching ballroom dancing to workers, efficiently and economically. We can do this for you, too. Registration daily 2-10 P.M., Studio 7B, 66 Fifth Ave., GRamercy 7-2529.

FURS

PARISIAN FUR CRAFTSMAN with factory in Wholesale district can give you 35% below retail rates on remodeling and repairing of any fur garment. Storage vaults at Revillon Freres, minimum $2.50. NOTE: New Fur Jackets available as low as $35. ARMAND ET SOEUR, 145 West 30 St. CHickering 4-1424.

HOSIERY

FINEST LISLE & OTHER TYPES, Union made at wholesale prices. AGENTS WANTED. Eastern Hosiery Co., 330 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

NURSE

BABY'S TRAINED nurse, experienced, NURSERY GOVERNESS, capable, French speaking, COUNTRY PREFERRED, 1 or 2 children. Write N. M. Box 1725.

PIANO TUNING

PIANO TUNING, regulating, repairing and voicing. Pianos appraised. Excellent work. Ralph J. Appleton, 505 Fifth Avenue. Tel. MUrray Hill 2-2291.

PICTURE FRAMING

FINE PICTURE FRAMING. Large selection of MODERN PRINTS. Graphic Arts Exchange, 1147 B'way, nr. 26 St. MU 4-3586. 10% discount to NM readers.

SPEECH IMPROVEMENT

COMMAND RESPECT and ATTENTION when you speak! Small classes. Hana Unger Speech Studio, 15 East 40th Street, N. Y. LEx 2-9448. 11 A.M.—8 P.M.

SUMMER BUNGALOWS

MODERN 2 & 3 Room Bungalows—NOT COLONY. Secluded country near lake, sleeping porch. Commuting. Reasonable. S. Kirshman, New City, N. Y. Phone 2297.

WEARING APPAREL

SALE AT MISS GOODMAN'S! Hats $2 to $5, formerly to $15. Dresses, Coats, Suits (all of luxury standard) 33⅓ to 40% off. 474 7th Avenue (near 36th Street—2nd fl.) LA 4-4013.


# GOINGS ON

CURRENT EVENTS CLUB meets every THURSDAY 8:30 P.M. at 772 High Street, Newark, N. J. Lecturer: DON LESTER. Admission 25 cents.

SENDER GARLILN in Repeat-Lecture on RICHARD WRIGHT'S NATIVE SON at Progressive Forum, 430 Sixth Avenue, FRIDAY evening, APRIL 26, 8:15 P.M. Discusison from floor. Susbcription 25c.

CLARENCE HATHAWAY, Editor, Daily Worker, speaks SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2:30 P.M. Subject, "THE BASIC ISSUES." Victoria Room, Irving Plaza, Irving Place & 15th Street. Admission 25c.

SENDER GARLIN speaks on DO THE JEWS HAVE A STAKE IN THE WAR IN EUROPE?—Midtown Forum, Hotel Monterey, 94 St. & B'way—SUN., APR. 28, 8:30 P.M. Adm. 25c.

ALFRED GOLDSTEIN, popular political analyst, reviews THE NEWS OF THE WEEK every SUNDAY EVENING, at Workers School, 2nd floor, 35 East 12 Street. Admission 25c.

*Please mention* NEW MASSES *when patronizing advertisers*

struct satisfactory rationalizations. Mr. Mumford and Mr. Schapiro have good political reasons connected with the defense of "Western Civilization," or the scourging of everyone opposed to the British and American empires. The war party among the intellectuals is fully manned and calling for a Creel.

William Zorach, the sculptor, also turned in his chips. Mr. Zorach doesn't have any reasons and will have the decency not to invent any. Mr. Zorach is an old-fashioned nonjoining type, of which French concentration camps and universities-in-exile have many.

The answer of the hundreds of artists left in the Congress is a good one. They are holding an exhibition at 785 Fifth Ave. in New York City. There has been no jury and everybody's picture is on the wall, including some perfectly frightful painting. There are enough echoes of Picasso, Gropper, John Sloan, Rivera, O'Keefe, Sheeler, and surrealism to make your ears ring. There are also enough artists who are themselves to make this one of the best shows of American art.

Here are a few of the oils I liked best: Sol Wilson's *Men on Horses,* a little landscape with figures, fresh as a head of cabbage. Maurice Becker's thick and ominous *Detroit Cleric. Triumphal Entry* by Sylvia Wald, a work of unusual color and drama. Sakari Suzuki's *Landscape,* with stinging color and an unusual appreciation of eastern American landscape. Stuyvesant Van Veen's theatrical but arresting painting of a suicide contemplating his leap into a desolate street; Helen West Heller's *Yang-T'-Ze Kiang and Kankakee,* a fascinating allegorical painting in a prim, thinly painted technique; Kuniyoshi's *Refugees;* Mervin Jules' *Dispossessed,* which must certainly have been painted by an excited man.

A tiny painting by Will Barnet, called *My Mother,* is one of the delights of the show with its Matisselike color and the mute, restrained feeling that shines through it.

Symeon Shimin, a muralist, presents a distinguished conte crayon study. Harry Gottlieb, pioneer in the important silk screen color process, has hung one of the finest things in the show in his silk screen print, *Nor Rain Nor Snow.* This view of skaters is as pictorial and indigenous as a Currier & Ives, which suggests that silk screen is truly a new color-print medium for mass distribution and, properly organized, may take the long-vacant place of Currier & Ives. The silk screen artists might consider doing topical, literary, and historical subjects as well as the excellent landscapes that have already appeared.

The sculpture is of good quality, led, in my taste, by Chaim Gross, David K. Rubins, and an inspired piece by Aaron J. Goodelman, entitled *Kultur.* Mr. Goodelman has found a long twisted piece of pearwood that must have been designed by El Greco while the Creator was busy with something else. The sculptor has followed the shape of the trunk to free a suggestion of a Negro being lynched.

Altogether, I think the Congress would rather work than mourn its distinguished departed.

JAMES DUGAN.


**CHESTERS' ZUNBARG**

WANTED: SPRINGTIME ESCAPISTS! Enjoy a PREVIEW OF SPRING at this delightful mountain hideaway. All Spring sports, as the weather permits, including Horseback Riding, Roller Skating, Bicycling, Handball. Indoor diversions include Ping Pong, Dancing, a salon-full of Recording Treasures, Modern Library, Open-Hearth Fires, the material for lively conversation. Rooms heated and cozy, the vittels delicious, the company congenial. Open all year. Tel. Fallsburg 53.

WOODBOURNE, N. Y.

**IN THE HEART OF THE RAMAPO MTS. . . .**

Birdland

One hour from New York, 225 acres in fascinating hiking country, 5 miles of paths. Tennis, Golf, Handball, Riding, Bicycles, Roller Skating. Library. Open Fireplaces. Congenial atmosphere. Excellent Cuisine. Adults. Tel.: Highland Mills 7895
OPEN ALL YEAR
Formerly Lewisohn's Estate
CENTRAL VALLEY, N. Y.
Mgt. Fannie Goldberg

*When in Lakewood Be Sure to Visit*

**THE ROYALE**

708 Princeton Ave. Lakewood, N. J. — Telephone: Lakewood 1146

*An excellent Russian trio, Our New Annex Assures You of Added Social and Sport Facilities Make Your Reservations Early*

SONIA GELBAUM — ANNA BROUDE
SPECIAL DIETS

**TRIPLE LAKE RANCH**

*only 37 miles from New York*

Enjoy unusual weekends this Spring . . . Ride through woodland trails. Play all sports. Free instruction. Square dancing. Comfortable accommodations. Excellent food. Special Winter Rates still in effect.

SUCCASUNNA, N.J. N.Y. Phone: TRiangle 5-2163

THRILL TO THE JOYS OF SPRING AT

**PLUM POINT**

the year 'round vacation resort

Magnificent estate on the Hudson River. Only 53 miles from New York. All outdoor sports. Saddle Horses on Grounds. Fine Library. Musical Recordings. Superlative Cuisine. Booklet sent on Request.
Write P. O. Box 471, Newburgh, N. Y.
Phone Newburgh 4270.

AN ARTIST INVITES YOU

to...his 100-acre farm
...superlative cooking
...homey atmosphere
...fireplaces, hobby house
...complete sports facilities

Rates $3.50—$4 daily, from $18 weekly

GEORGE A. PODORSON, N. Y. C. Phone: PLaza 3-8926
or Locust Grave Farm, Sylvan Lake, Hopewell Junction, N. Y.

**CAMP BEACON**

Beacon, N. Y. Telephone: Beacon 731

Hotel Accommodations
SERVICE GALORE!
ALL SPORTS

$17.00 per week :: $3.25 per day
For transportation phone OL 5-7828

**Camp CHI-WAN-DA**

FOR BOYS and GIRLS
ULSTER PARK, N.Y.

On the Mountain Lake Esopus overlooking the Beautiful Hudson River.

We present a modern cultural environment for your children. All cabins with latest improvements. Reasonable rates. For full information, write or call for booklet.

JACOB I. DOROSHKIN, *Director*
545 Fifth Ave., MU 2-4213 — DI 2-7432

*Please mention* NEW MASSES *when patronizing advertisers*


PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# *If the* **DAR** *does it...why can't you?*

## In Our May Day and Forthcoming Issues

***Corliss Lamont***

writes an important piece, expressing "Reasons for Optimism" over the present state of world affairs. A statement that will be talked about.

***Anna Louise Strong***

continues her trip across the continent, the first passage of which, published in NEW MASSES three weeks ago, aroused wide comment.

***William Blake***

noted author and novelist, recalls the 122nd anniversary of Karl Marx's birth, May 5. An American looks at Karl Marx.

***Barbara Giles***

a NEW MASSES editor, tells the farmer's story. What the man who must do the spring planting, in 1940 thinks about the harvest. Informative and different.

---

NEW MASSES, 461 FOURTH AVE., N. Y. C.
Please enter my subscription to *New Masses* for the period indicated by the checkmark:

☐ six months, $2.50; ☐ one year, $4.50;
☐ two years, $7.50; ☐ three years, $10

Name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

City and State . . . . . .

Amount Enclosed $ . . . . . 4-30-40

WE just couldn't believe our census—and neither would you. But the newspapers say that the Daughters of the American Revolution have been advised to "start reading NEW MASSES." According to an Associated Press dispatch for April 15, a worthy Joseph Carleton Beal told the Daughters "there is a crying need for red-blooded Americans to roll up their sleeves, and get busy educating in the principles of Americanism." Urging them to learn the tactics of "boring from within," Mr. Beal further suggested that the Daughters "take lessons in organization."

You won't believe it, friends—but the subs suddenly jumped to new levels last week, and the NEW MASSES Readers League has received applications from the most fashionable addresses, the swanky suburbs all about. It must be the Daughters! Next thing you know they'll be sending delegations to our door: wanting to join us in the May Day parade. Just listen to the Daughters joining in that old marching song: Solidarity Forever!

If the Daughters can do it, friends, so can everybody else. Read NEW MASSES, we say, and know that the very best people are reading it with you. Get your friends to subscribe, beginning with the May Day issue: $4.50 for 12 months; $2.50 for six months. Read NEW MASSES, folks, and you'll never be bored from within.

# NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

*Keep Abreast of the Truth*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED